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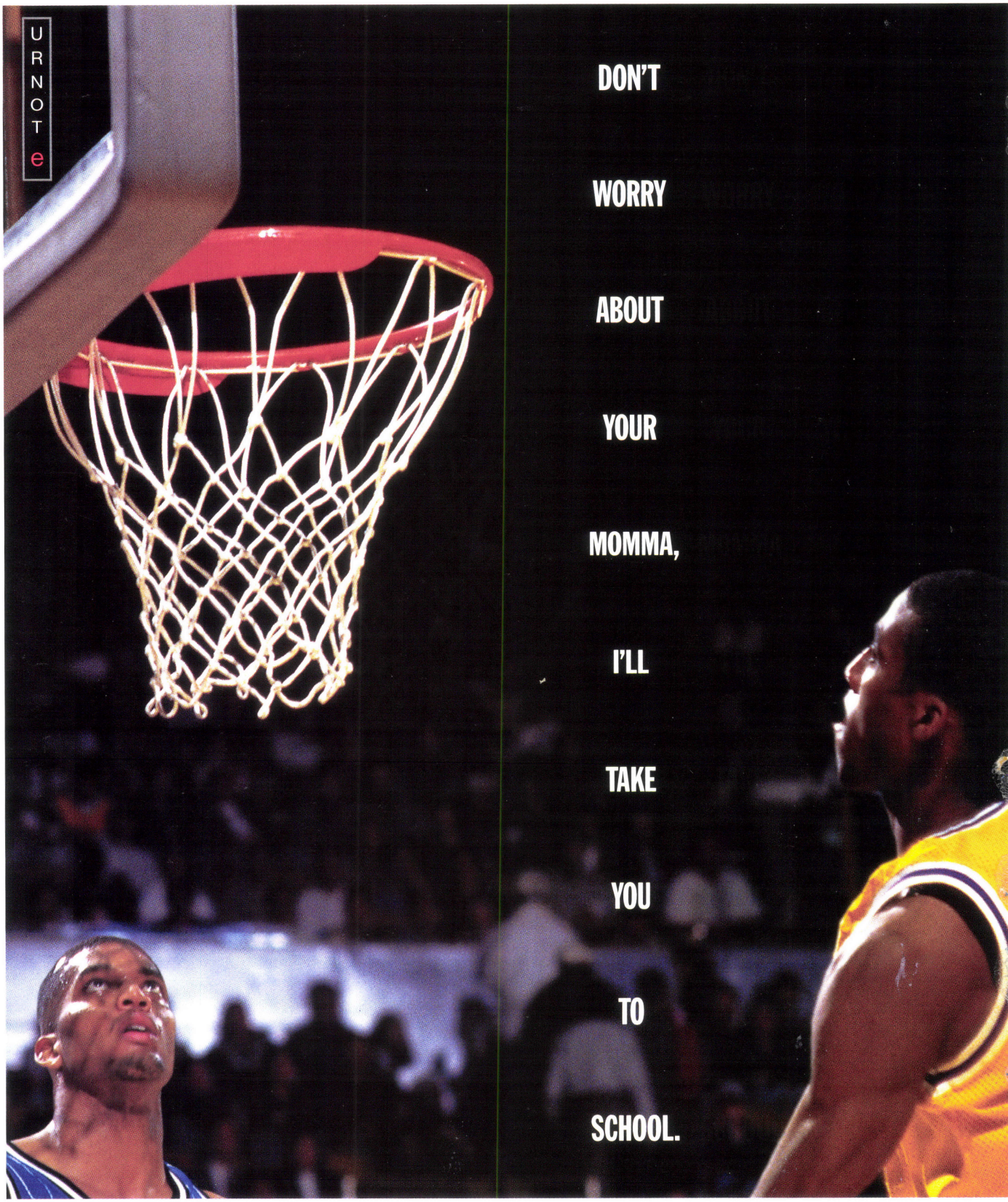

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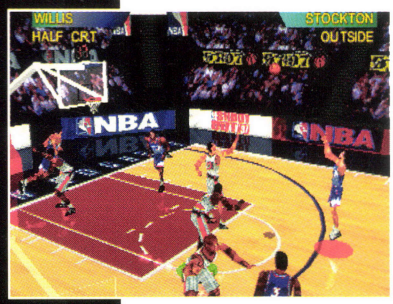

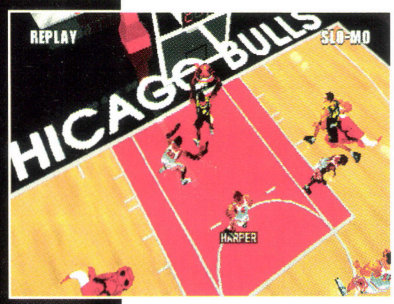

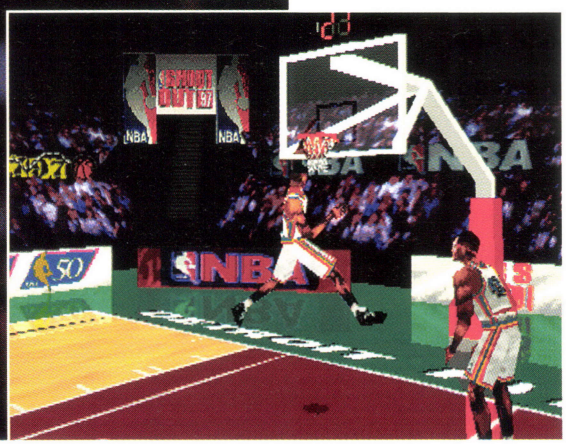

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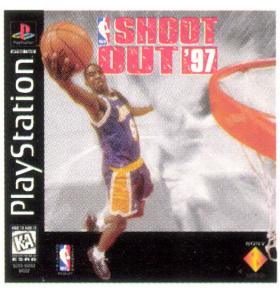

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SPORTS VIDEO GAMES

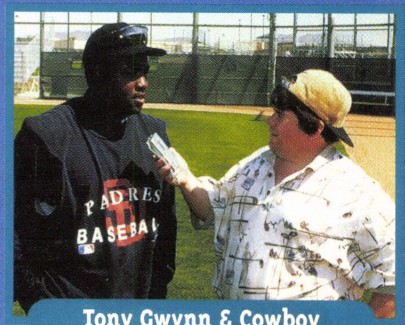
Spring 1997

SPRING TRAINING THIS YEAR WAS FULL OF SURPRISES

Welcome to the wide world of sports gaming. On the following pages we squeal the tires and go up through the gears with some of the hottest 32-Bit racing titles on the market. We'll be covering some classic sports titles and taking a look at other games currently in development. In addition to all that, we preview and review some classic baseball, fishing and golf titles in this our first-ever *Electronic Gaming Monthly Players' Guide to Sports Video Games.*

Whether you currently own a 32-Bit gaming system or you are about to purchase your first one, the big question on many gamers' minds is: What system is the best system for playing sports games?

The Sony PlayStation is clearly the obvious choice for the moment as it leads the next-generation gaming category in terms of sheer number of sports titles and the overall quality of software available. The PlayStation is also a favorite of developers as the licensing fees and production costs are manageable. Many professional athletes currently own PlayStations and play them on a regular basis, including Atlanta Braves all-star pitcher Greg Maddux and San Diego Padres Hall of Fame-bound hitter Tony Gwynn. We caught up with both big-leaguers and interviewed them at Spring Training.



Tony Gwynn & Cowboy

The business of sports gaming is becoming very competitive, mirroring any rivalry that takes place in a professional sport. Companies are bidding to get athletes under contract, sometimes paying them so they don't endorse products for other gaming companies.

While attending Spring Training, I witnessed some of this competitiveness first-hand, when Seattle Mariners security personnel wouldn't let EA Sports crews film at the Mariners ballpark. That just didn't make any sense to me. You are probably aware Nintendo owns the Mariners. They gave strict orders that no competing gaming companies could film at that location. The ironic thing is EA Sports is one of the few licensees paying Nintendo a ridiculous $40 per-game royalty (not counting production costs) to make N64 games. EA Sports has FIFA 98 currently for the Nintendo 64 and they recently inked an eight-game deal to be one of the main sports developers for the system. That's how competitive the sports gaming business is becoming.

This is our first Spring Sports Guide. We're also doing one in the fall. Until then, enjoy the issue!

Baseball season is in full swing...

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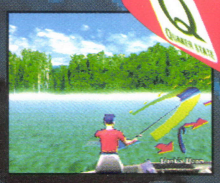
SPORTS VIDEO GAMES



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62 Dare2Compare Racing
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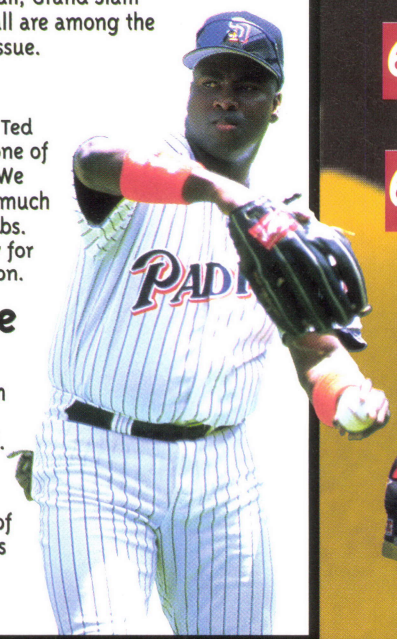

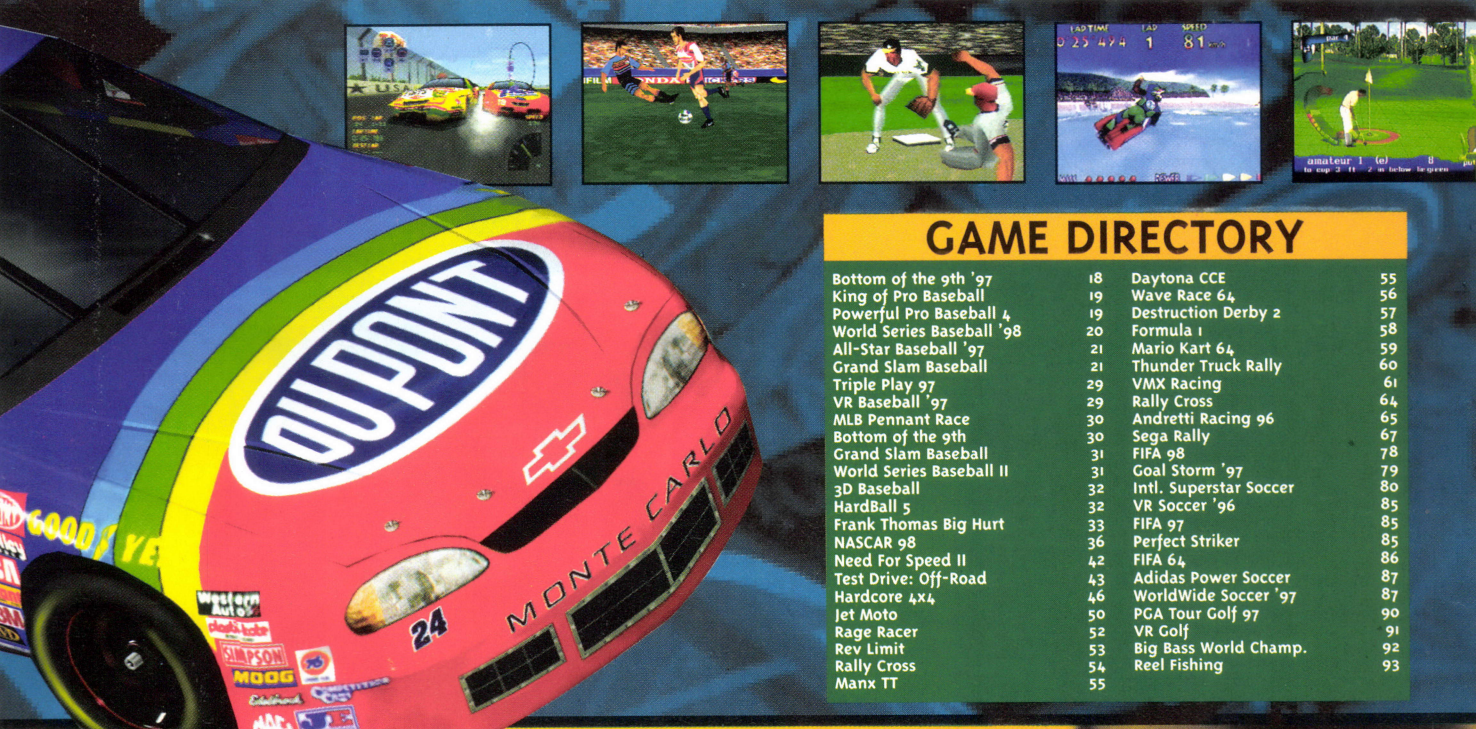

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72 The Flying Wynalda!
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84 Dare2Compare Soccer
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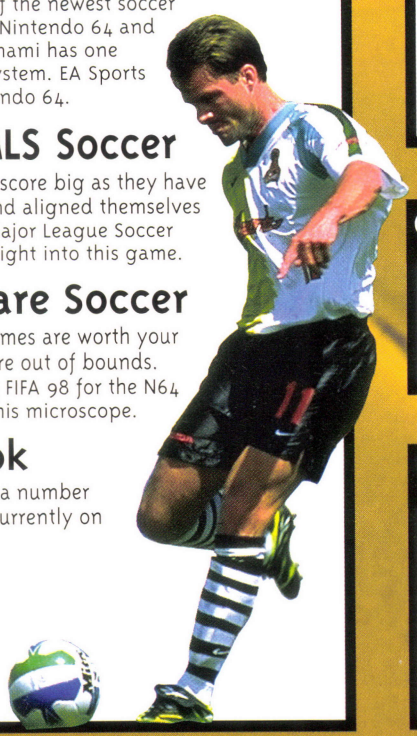

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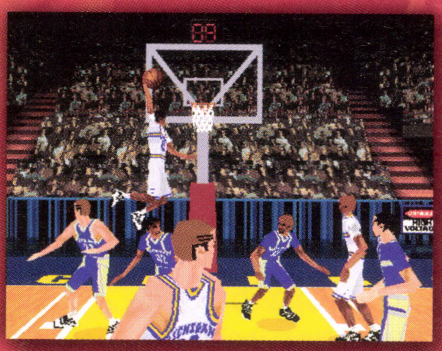
ELEVATE, dish, PUMP, DOUBLE CLUTCH and Drain it...



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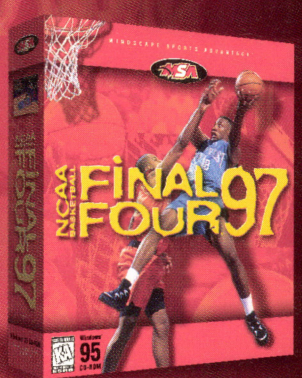
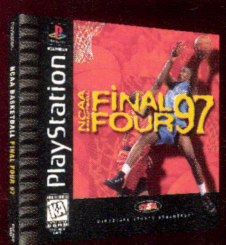


THE ONLY HOOP GAME THAT FEELS AS GOOD AS IT LOOKS.



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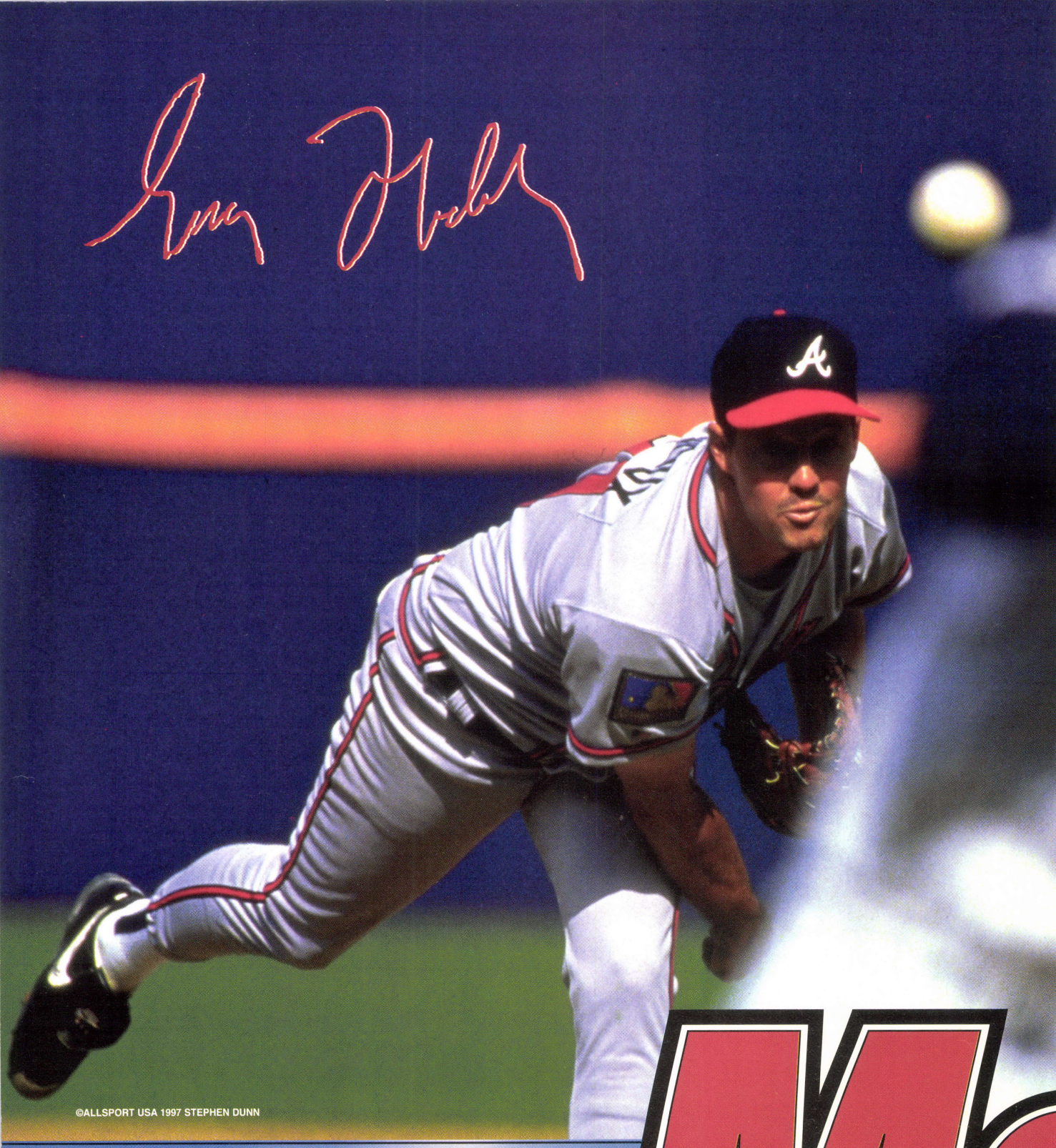


Stepping Up to the Plate with Ma

"MADDOG" MADDUX IS HURLING HIS WAY TO THE HALL OF FAME

Greg Maddux

By Todd Mowatt

Maddux doesn't do commercials, color his hair or celebrate when he strikes out the side. Maddux doesn't want the spotlight. The only thing he is focused on from April until the middle of October is getting batters out by making his pitches count—and in some instances he also focuses on saving the princess. That's right, Maddux is one of the most avid video gamers in the major leagues.

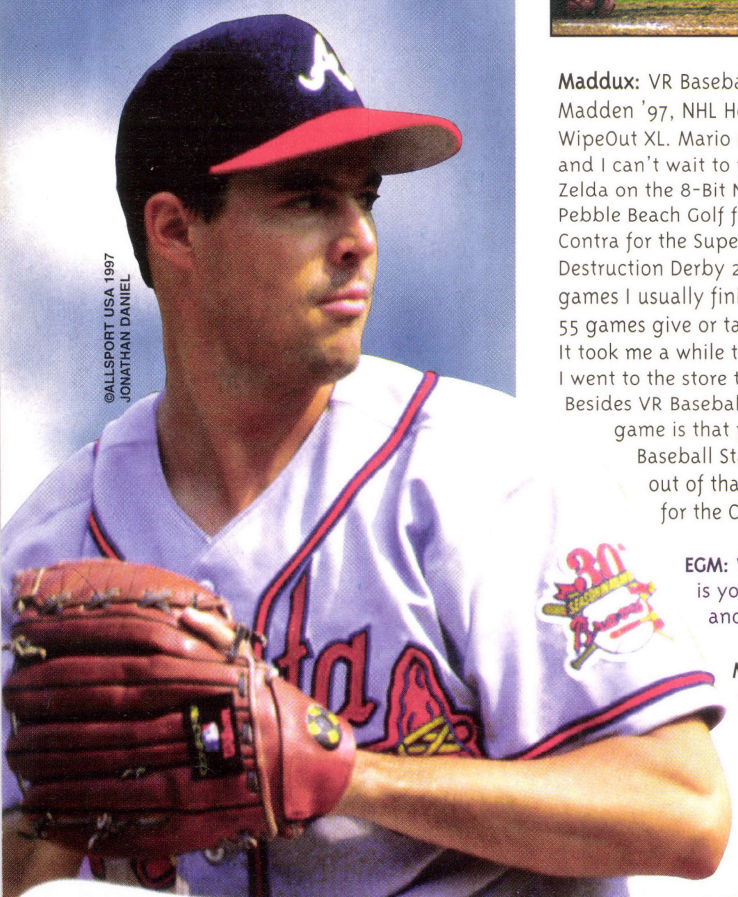
During his time with the Atlanta Braves, he has won the National League Cy Young award as the best pitcher in the National League four years in a row. That's more than any other big-league pitcher in the modern era.

But it hasn't always been a one, two three inning for Maddux. At one time in his career he struggled on the mound. At one point he had the dubious honor of leading the Appalachian League in 1984 in the hit batsmen department, beaning eight opposing hitters. Two years later he broke his own record when he picked off 14 batsmen.

But those are only two blemishes in an otherwise glorious career which will undoubtedly land him in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Since his darker days he has won six gold gloves with the Braves and one World Series trophy. Maddux is perhaps the only player in the baseball history to have owned a Sega Genesis, a Super Nintendo, a Nintendo 64, a Sony PlayStation and a World Series ring.

He's an avid gamer who loves to play video games. Recently we had a chance to speak with Maddux, who is gracing the cover of Interplay's VR Baseball '97 packaging.

"As a big-league pitcher, you have to prove yourself over and over again. You're only as good as your last game."



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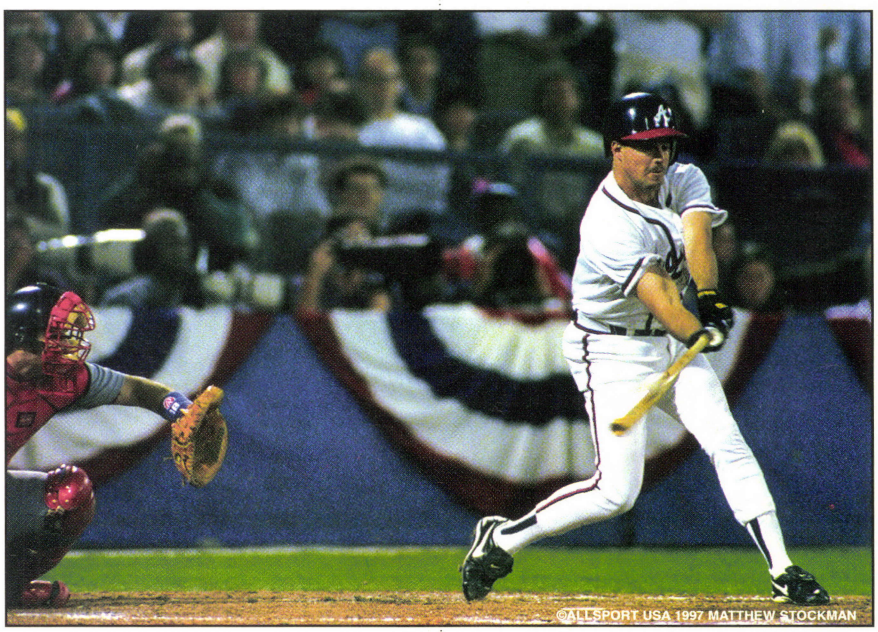
JONATHAN DANIEL

Maddux is no ordinary poster boy, and when he retires from the game of baseball, he may be the only Hall of Famer to know the difference between Super Mario and Zelda—and also have a 95 mph fastball and a great curve ball.

Recently we had a chance to step up to the plate, figuratively speaking, and ask him about baseball and his gaming habits.

EGM: What are a few of your favorite video games?



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Maddux: VR Baseball for the PlayStation, Madden '97, NHL Hockey, Jet Moto, WipeOut XL. Mario 64 for the Nintendo 64 and I can't wait to play Zelda 64. I loved Zelda on the 8-Bit Nintendo. I still play Pebble Beach Golf for the Sega Genesis, Contra for the Super Nintendo and Destruction Derby 2. When I play video games I usually finish them. I've finished 55 games give or take including Mario 64. It took me a while to get a Nintendo 64. I went to the store three or four times. Besides VR Baseball, another favorite game is that perennial classic Baseball Stars. I played the heck out of that game when I played for the Chicago Cubs.

EGM: What gaming system is your favorite right now and why?

Maddux: It was getting pretty bad there for a while with new systems coming out every couple of months. I like all of the systems, the PlayStation, the Nintendo 64 and the Sega Saturn. The next-generation systems are a little pricey, but the games are a step above the 16-Bit titles. I don't get to play games that much at home. But during baseball season, that's the time when I get plenty of gaming in. At home I keep myself pretty busy with my family.

EGM: What are your feelings on the way you and the Braves played in the last few World Series? Do you feel as though you have to prove yourself again this year?

Maddux: As a big-league pitcher you always have to prove yourself over and over. You are only as good as your last game. Even though we've gotten one World Series ring, being in it the last five of the last six years is an incredible accomplishment. It's always tougher to get there the second and third time around.

EGM: How much do you and the other pitchers talk about how to pitch a particular batter?

Maddux: We don't really talk a whole lot about it. I think that's why we're so good. I think that there are a lot of teams that have 10 pitchers and they all try to pitch the same way. In Atlanta we have 10 pitchers and we have 10 guys who know how they want to pitch. I might get a batter out a certain way and Tom Glavine will get him out his way and John Smoltz will get him out his way. I think that's one of the reasons why we're good. Everyone understands there are different ways to pitch and they know which way works [best] for them.

Continued on page 16

Aaron & Ruth are back...

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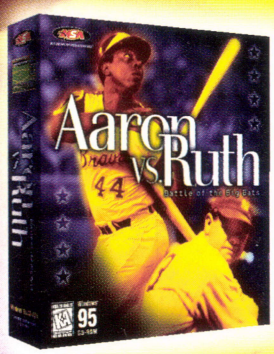

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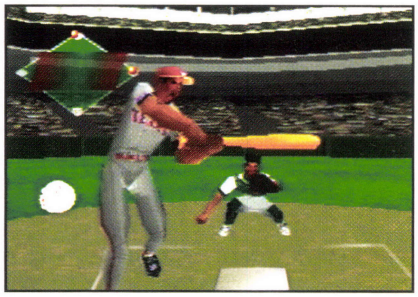
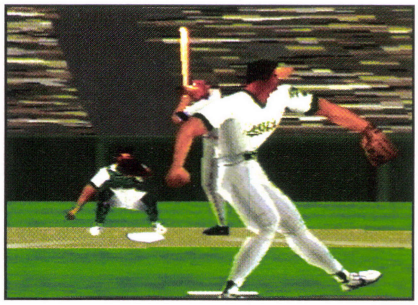
the making of VR Baseball '97

VR Sports is swinging for the fences with their newest arrival, VR Baseball '97 for the Sony PlayStation. Under development for over two years, the game is finally set to hit store shelves. Recently, the editors of Team EGM got a chance to speak with the designers of this long-awaited title, and they gave us a glimpse into the work that went into this ambitious game.

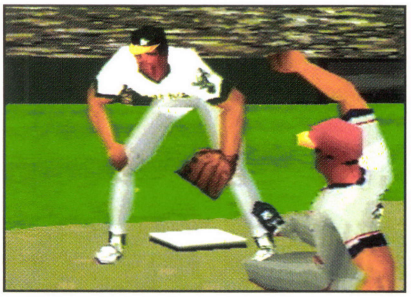
Part of the reason that VR Baseball '97 has been such a long time coming is that VR Sports worked on a Saturn version of the game for one and a half years. Paul Sackman, director of marketing for VR Sports, explained why a final Saturn

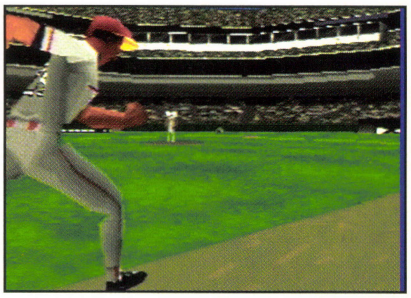


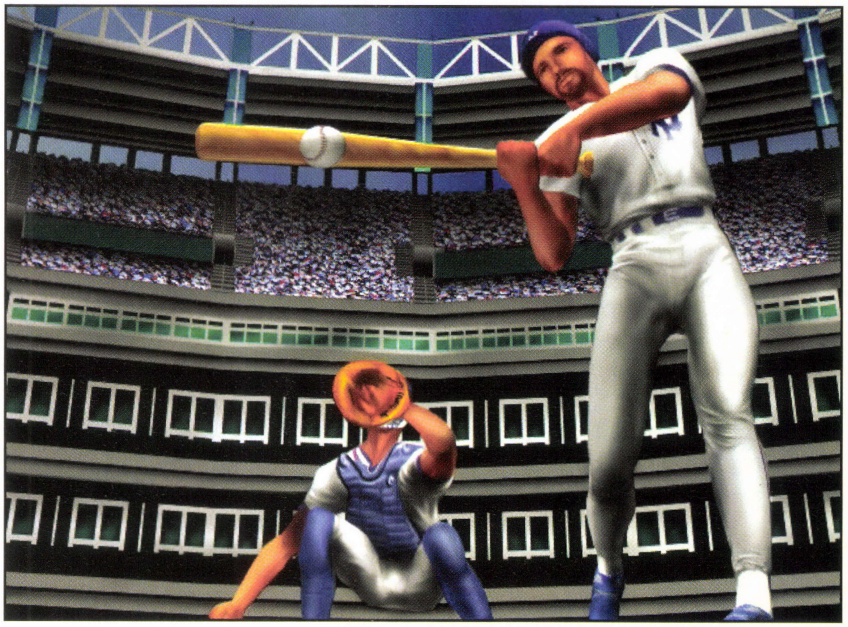


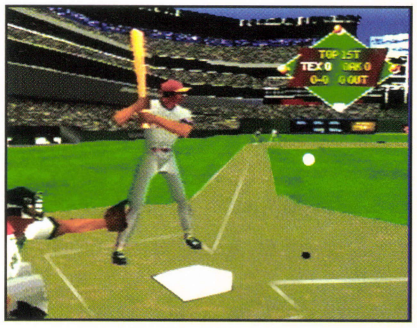
version was never to be. "At E³, everybody said, 'This is the best baseball game that nobody is ever going to see,' because we didn't have the visual impact that was necessary to really make it work. So we basically retooled. We changed every single [player] model; we did another 200-move motion-capture shoot; we replaced every single stadium model; we hired three additional artists....The only thing that is the same as the Saturn code is the baseball engine itself." So what prompted them to switch to the PlayStation? "The Sony hardware allows us to push a lot more polygons and use a lot more texture maps. We got the director of Interplay's 3-D department to come out of retirement to create all-new player models. We texture-mapped everything from the names and numbers on the backs of jerseys to cleats on the bottoms of shoes."

Graphic realism is only part of the story, however. VR Sports took a unique approach to their statistic handling, as well. "We had originally worked with Stats Inc., [but] we came up with a mathematical formula we liked better than theirs. What we're doing is taking a mathematical formula that takes into account the player's career stats, three years ago stats, two years ago stats, and last year's stats to give an internal invisible rating, which makes our simulator much better. If a guy has a hot year, he's not suddenly the greatest player in the history of baseball."









It's obvious from what we've seen that the designers at VR Sports have attempted to do away with many of the conventions of the latest batch of baseball titles in favor of some new and innovative features. One thing is certain: A game like this doesn't come along every season.

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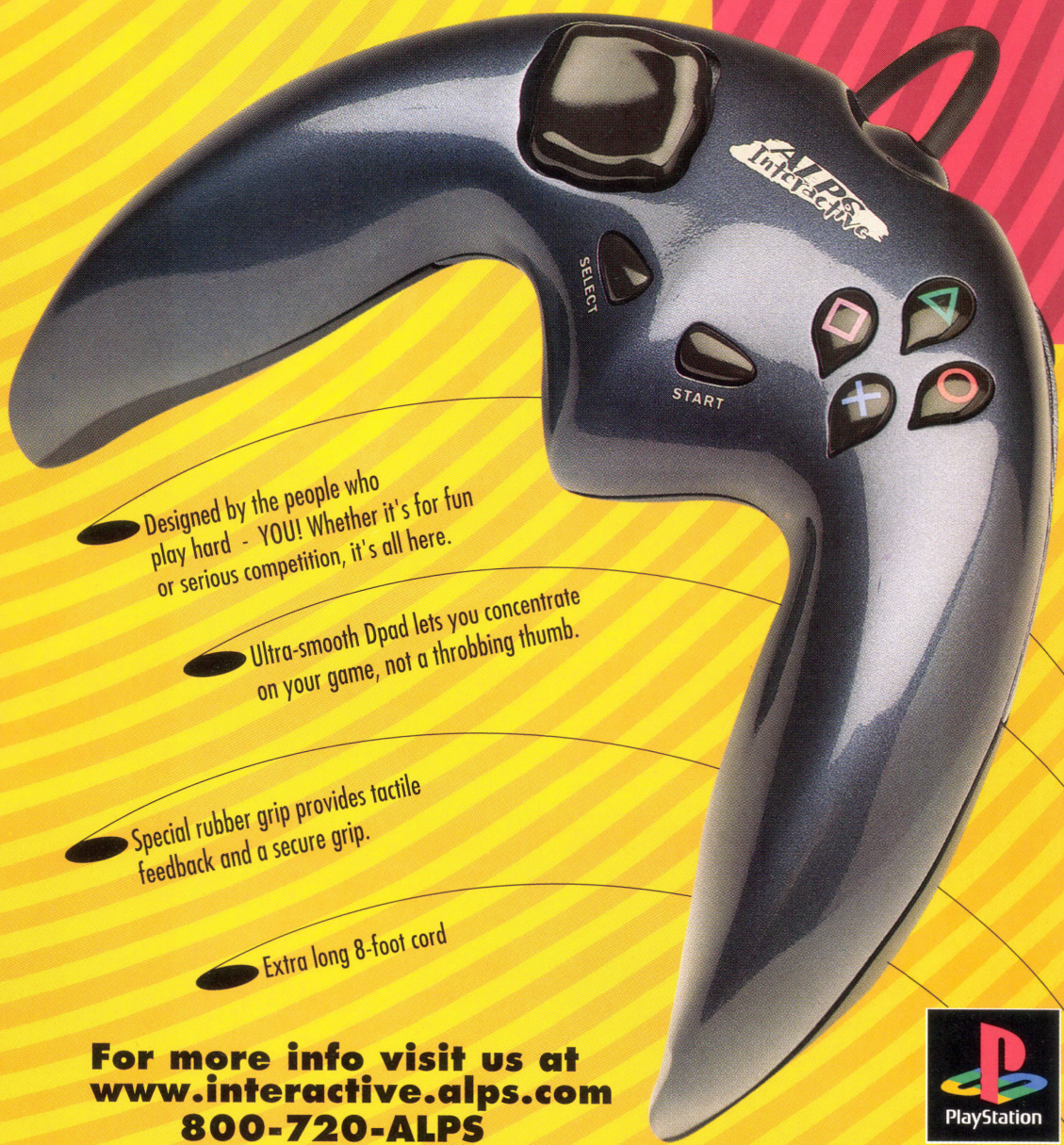

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EGM: Did the Chicago Cubs situation motivate you and set the stage for the rest of your career?

Maddux: I think it gave me some added incentive. I mean how can you not be motivated to go out there and pitch. It gave me the boost I needed. I was at the stage of my career where I felt I was just entering my prime. I felt my best years were ahead of me when I left the Cubs. I was upset, but Atlanta hasn't turned out to be all that bad of a place to be.

EGM: If you could change anything that has taken place in your baseball career what would you change?

Maddux: Nothing! Now, if we hadn't won the World Series in 1995 against Cleveland, it would be a different story. Baseball has been very good to me and my family and to want more out of it would be pretty selfish. I feel as though I am on extra credits right now (to use a gaming arcade term). Baseball has taken care of me and taken care of my family.

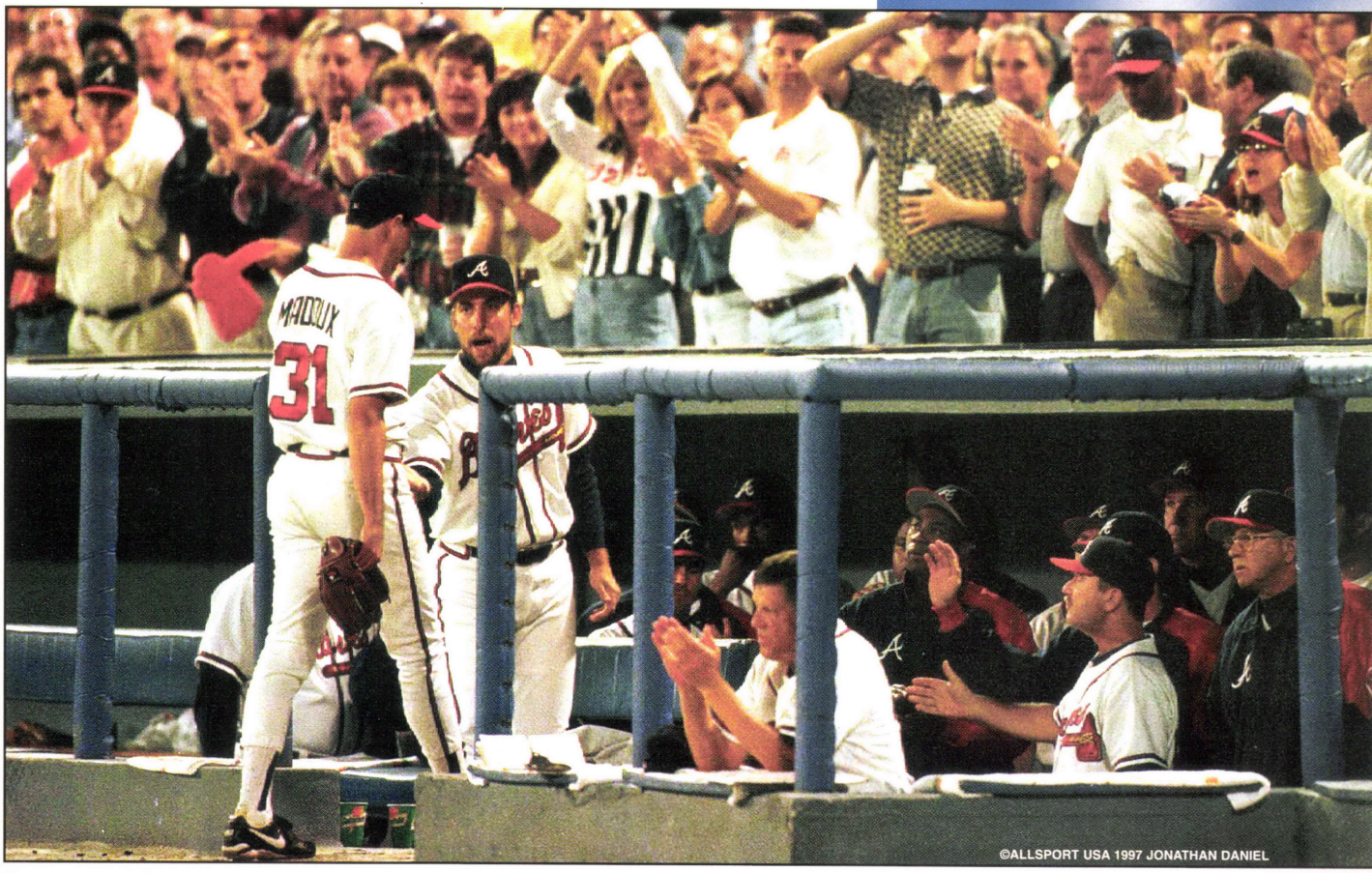
EGM: What are some of the craziest superstitions you or your teammates have?

Maddux: I'm not real superstitious to begin with. Some people say they'd rather be lucky than good. I don't buy that, I'd rather be good than lucky. Getting a few breaks along the way is nice, but the bottom line is if you go out there and make good pitches, then when it is all said and done you are going to have a good year.

EGM: Who are the toughest batters to get out that you face? List the top five in your opinion.

Maddux: Probably in our league, Barry Bonds or Gary Sheffield. They are both very good hitters and their approach to hitting is similar. They both hit for average and they both hit for power. They both have a lot of speed and if you don't watch them, they can steal a base on you if you're not careful. Anytime you can combine average and power and speed, those are always the hardest hitters to face. I think you have to throw Tony Gwynn in there. Jeff Bagwell is pretty good too. The problem is there are usually two or three good hitters on every team. So it's pretty tough to name just five guys. Mike Piazza is also pretty good. He doesn't run as well as the rest of the guys, but he hits the ball quite a bit harder.

"Some people say they'd rather be lucky than good. I don't buy that. I'd rather be good than lucky."



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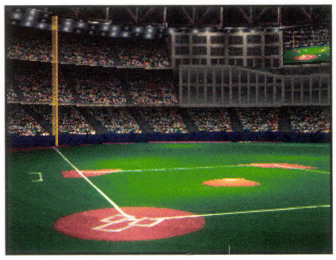
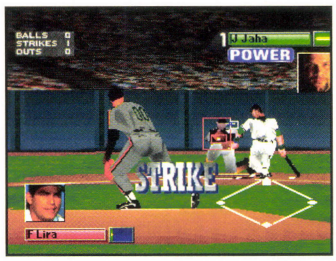
Bottom of the 9th '97

Konami swings for the fences once again with their hardball sequel





"The first game won over many with its fluidly animated players and arcade-like batting interface."

Konami has added more stadiums for Bottom of the 9th '97 and the choice of playing either day or night games.

fact file

- **system**: PlayStation, Saturn
- **publisher**: Konami
- **developer**: Konami
- **% complete**: 85%
- **difficulty**: Moderate
- **players**: 1 or 2
- **release date**: Spring '97

Konami will be stepping up to the plate once again with the release of Bottom of the 9th '97. The first game won over many gamers with its fluidly animated polygonal players and arcade-like pitching and batting interfaces. Konami has made a host of improvements in this year's version, making Bottom of the 9th '97 a definite pennant contender.

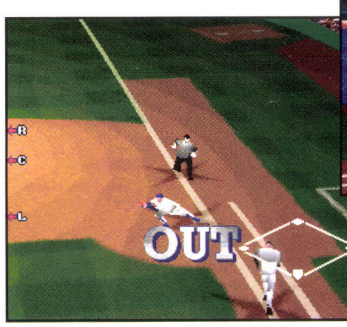
First off, Konami improved their unique 3-D batting interface. Many gamers loved the arcade-like aspects of the first interface, which really put players' reflexes to the test. Konami reportedly has taken their interface to the next level, making it even more realistic.

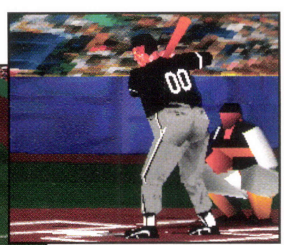
Bottom of the 9th's polygonal players allowed Konami to show the action from a variety of angles, replicating the look and feel of a real television broadcast. Konami wanted to heighten this aspect by adding even more camera angles.

Although Konami assures us Bottom of the 9th will contain an MLBPA license, they haven't indicated whether or not it will contain an MLB license. Many gamers felt the biggest strike against the first Bottom of the 9th was its fictitious team names and logos. For obvious reasons, it is much more preferable to include real team names, uniforms and logos plus real player names and statistics.

The lack of an MLB license also meant Konami was unable to include real stadiums in the first Bottom of the 9th. They have added a few more for '97 plus the choice of day or night games. Let's hope they manage to sneak the real Wrigley Field or Fenway Park in there somewhere.

The previous title also included a Practice Mode for novices to sharpen their fundamentals and a Home Run Derby where gamers can slug it out with baseball's heaviest hitters. Hopefully, Bottom of the 9th '97 will have all these features plus a whole lot more.





Thanks to the game's polygonal players, the action can be viewed from a variety of camera angles.

Did You Know?

The 1997 baseball season will be the first to feature interleague play during the regular season.

King of Pro Baseball

Imagineer steps to the plate with the first-ever N64 baseball game

Don't be fooled by the looks—this is one nice-playing baseball game.

Imagineer's King of Pro Baseball, released this past January in Japan, holds the honor of being the first-ever Nintendo 64 baseball title. Like most Japanese baseball games, King of Pro Baseball features stout little "3-D" ballplayers, but the gameplay is still as solid as they come.

There are over 15 teams available from the start, as well a host of 3-D modeled stadiums patterned after their real-life counterparts (in Japan). Extra features include the ability to create your own players, day and night play, and of course, full season play (with five, 25, 50, 100 or 130 game seasons).

Batting and pitching take place from a behind-the-batter's-box view, and the control is super smooth. Each pitcher has his own set of pitches and pitching style, and players will perform better (or worse) depending on their mood and/or current physical condition. Batting can be tricky, but like pitching, if the player feels good, they're more likely to cream the ball out of the park. Finally, fielding is a cinch thanks to the N64's four C buttons which are used to perfectly represent the four bases.

Sadly, we'll probably never see King of Pro Baseball in the U.S., but with the current drought of N64 sports titles, it may be worth your while to pick it up on import.

fact file

- system: Nintendo 64
- publisher: Imagineer
- developer: Imagineer
- % complete: N/A
- difficulty: variable
- players: 1-4
- release date: N/A

Powerful Pro Baseball 4

A classic baseball title from Japan that may or may not see our shores

fact file

- system: Nintendo
- publisher: Konami
- developer: Konami
- % complete: N/A
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1-4
- release date: N/A

Konami's Powerful Pro series has been around for a long time in Japan, so it's no surprise that a Nintendo 64 version has arrived. The gameplay is similar to Imagineer's baseball (top of the page), but the graphics aren't quite as nice. As an added bonus, Powerful Pro 4 comes bundled with a free N64 Controller Pak.

The batting and pitching system is a little awkward, but fielding is actually a little bit more refined than in Imagineer's game. And of course, all of the teams and players from Japan are here, as are their 3-D modeled stadiums, and commentary is provided throughout using Konami's patented Response Sound System (also used in Perfect Striker).

Konami currently has no plans to release this one in the U.S., but if their N64 soccer game does well, there's a good chance we'll see more 64 sports titles from them in the future.

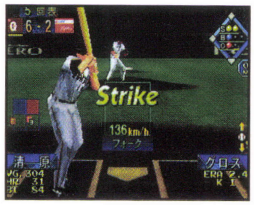
Multiple camera angles highlight the vertically challenged play.

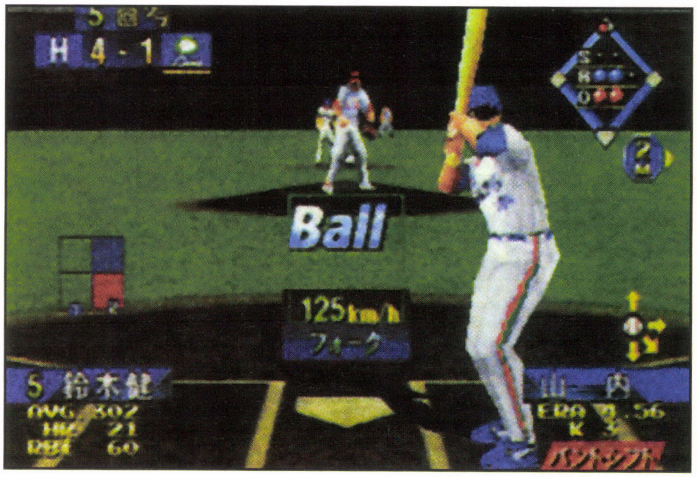
Did You Know?

The dimensions of home plate: five slabs of whitened rubber; 17 inches square with two corners removed.

World Series Baseball '98

Sega hopes to rule the baseball world again this year

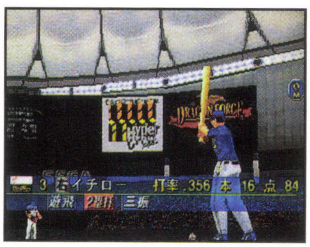




"Sega will scrap their previous engine in favor of a new polygonal one."

For avid sports gamers, the baseball season wouldn't be complete without a new installment of Sega's stellar World Series Baseball.

The first baseball title available for the Saturn, World Series Baseball was hailed as the first great 32-Bit sports game and was voted Baseball Game of the Year by the editors of *Electronic Gaming Monthly*. The game featured what would become the series' trademark look: polygonal stadiums with digitized players.



Expect to see an enhancement on the stadiums.

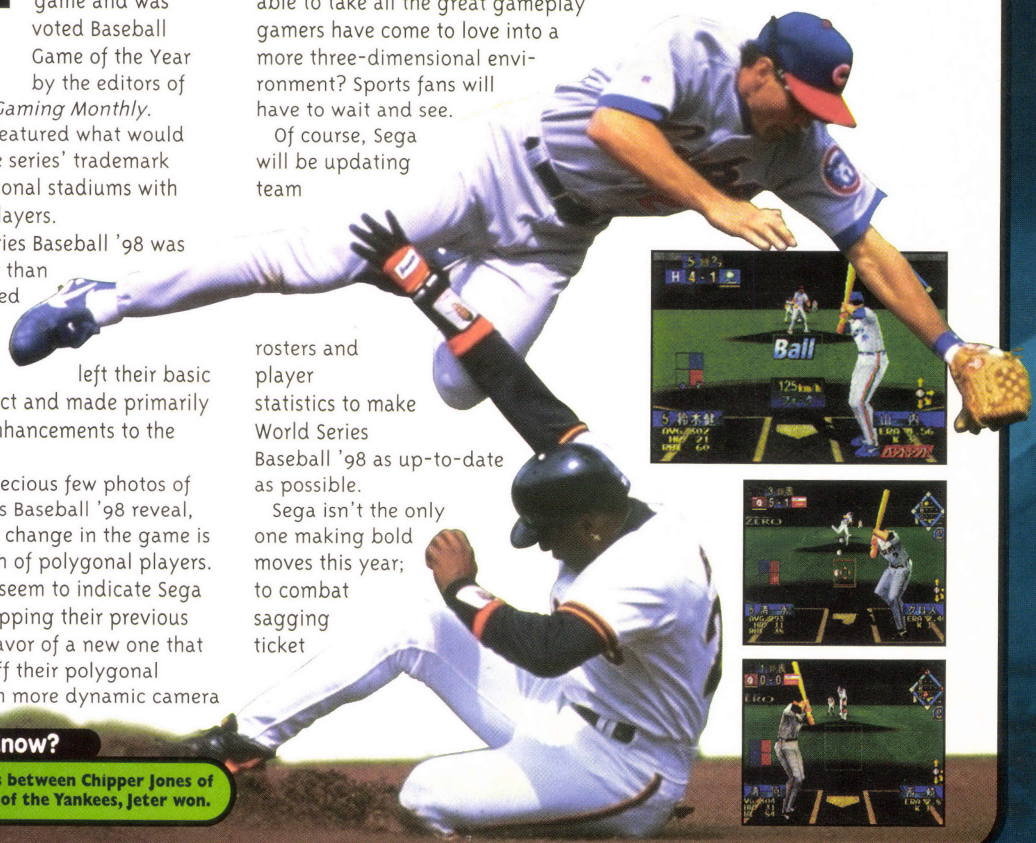
World Series Baseball '98 was even better than its celebrated predecessor. Sega left their basic engine intact and made primarily cosmetic enhancements to the game.

As the precious few photos of World Series Baseball '98 reveal, the biggest change in the game is the addition of polygonal players. This would seem to indicate Sega will be scrapping their previous engine in favor of a new one that will show off their polygonal players with more dynamic camera angles, quick cuts and the like.

Despite the tremendous advances made in motion-capture technology, many gamers still prefer 2-D digitized player sprites instead of blocky, marionette-like polygonal players. Will Sega be able to take all the great gameplay gamers have come to love into a more three-dimensional environment? Sports fans will have to wait and see.

Of course, Sega will be updating team rosters and player statistics to make World Series Baseball '98 as up-to-date as possible.

Sega isn't the only one making bold moves this year; to combat sagging ticket sales and dwindling television audiences, Major League Baseball has added interleague play to this year's regular season to spice things up a bit. Hopefully Sega will incorporate this feature into World Series Baseball '98.



fact file

- system: Saturn
- publisher: Sega
- developer: Sega
- % complete: 80%
- difficulty: Variable
- players: N/A
- release date: Fall

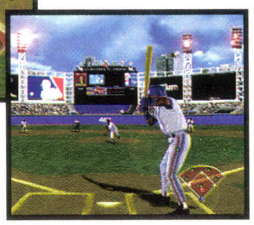
Did You Know?

In a simulated World Series between Chipper Jones of the Braves and Derek Jeter of the Yankees, Jeter won.

All-Star Baseball '97

It hurts so good Acclaim is taking to the diamond again

All-Star Baseball '97 will include realistic sound effects, from crowd noises to vendor chants.



Acclaim is enlisting the help of Chicago White Sox MVP Frank Thomas for yet another baseball title, All-Star Baseball '97. Fully licensed and packed with an impressive array of features, this is one game that baseball fans will not want to miss.

All-Star Baseball '97 is enhanced by a full Major League Baseball license, which allows the game to use all MLB names, logos and stadiums. It also includes a Major League Baseball Players Association license, which allows the use of player names, likenesses and statistics in the game. For example, the game includes over 700 color photos of actual major league players on every team.

On the management side of things, All-Star Baseball '97 gives gamers the ability to trade players in order to update team rosters as the actual season progresses. The game also features stat tracking in a number of categories when the game is in Season-play Mode.

Other realistic options include batting practice, an All-Star Game and a Home Run Derby giving gamers a chance to pit the greatest batters in baseball against one another in an interleague slugfest.

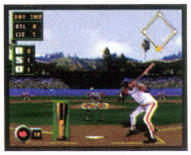
With a number of impressive extras, like sound effects from actual stadiums, All-Star Baseball '97 should be one game that any fan will want to add to his collection.

fact file

- system: PS/Saturn
- publisher: Acclaim
- developer: Iguana
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: 2nd Qtr. '97

Grand Slam Baseball

Virgin has the bases loaded with nobody out

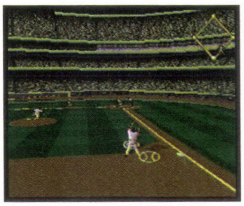


Virgin Entertainment is stepping into the batter's box with Grand Slam Baseball for the PlayStation. Grand Slam features unique, arcade-like pitching and batting meters that give gamers unprecedented control. The game also features "smart" fielders who cue the player on which cut-off man or base to throw to. Grand Slam's catchers also signal how to pitch to each real-life batter to exploit his weaknesses.

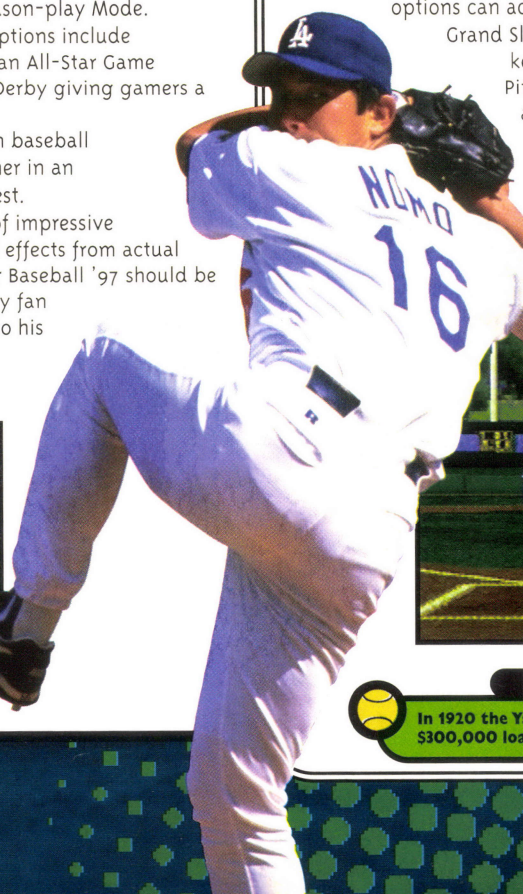
fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Virgin
- developer: Burst
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Variable
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: 2nd Qtr. '97

Grand Slam also has a unique sprint button to urge base runners to turn doubles into triples and a back pedaling option to give gamers fine control over fielders. Although developers have traditionally considered options like a speed-burst button to be too "arcade-like" for baseball sims, they don't seem to realize that real-life players often speak of "putting on an extra burst of speed" when hard-pressed to deliver, so such options can actually be considered *more* realistic.

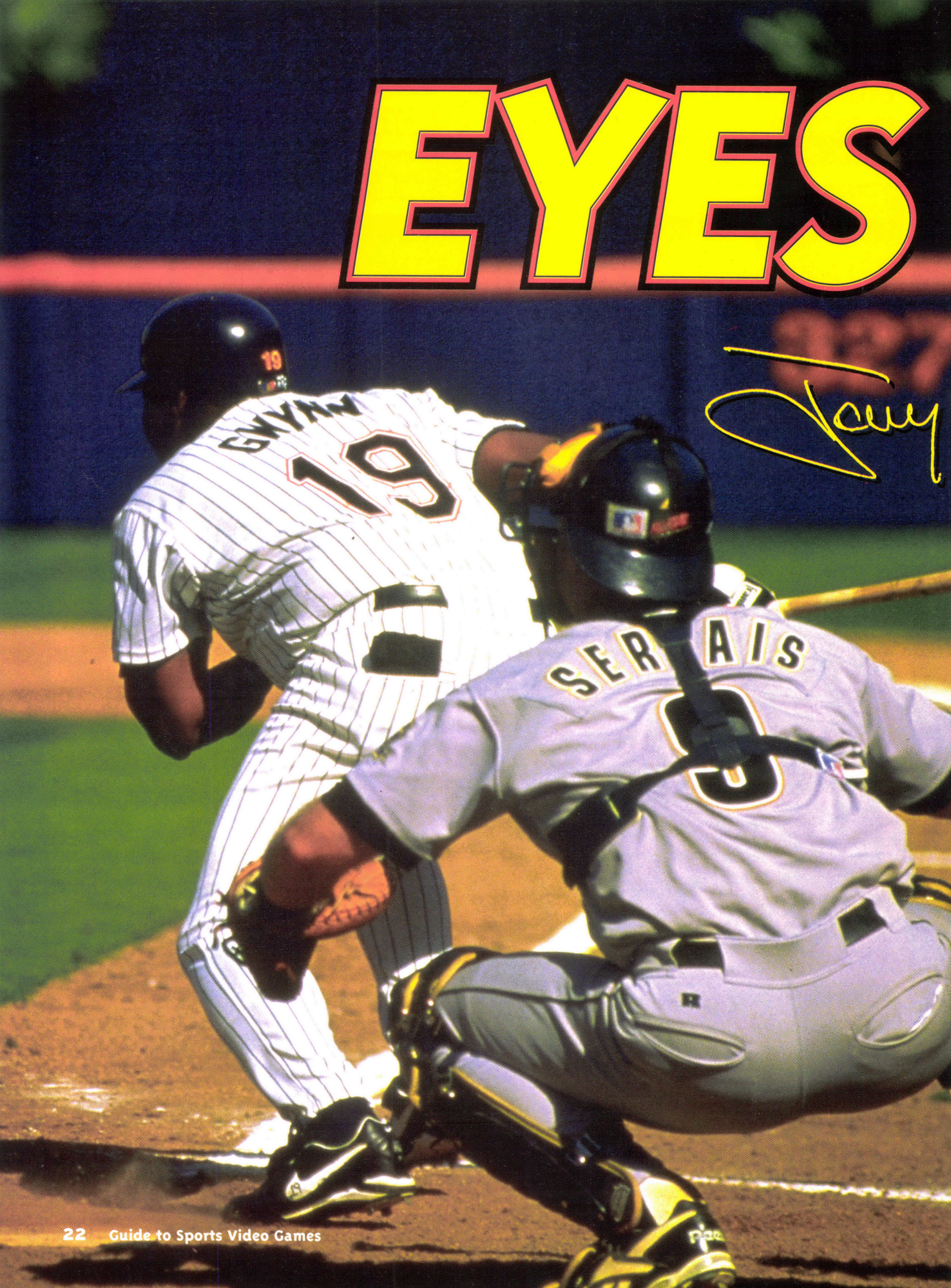


Grand Slam Baseball has many modes of play to keep gamers coming back for more. Pitch and Hit Mode is for those who want a fast, arcade-like style of play, while Simulation Mode allows gamers to play an entire season, complete with statistic tracking and player trades.



Did You Know?

In 1920 the Yankees paid a record $125,000 (plus a $300,000 loan) to the Red Sox to get Babe Ruth.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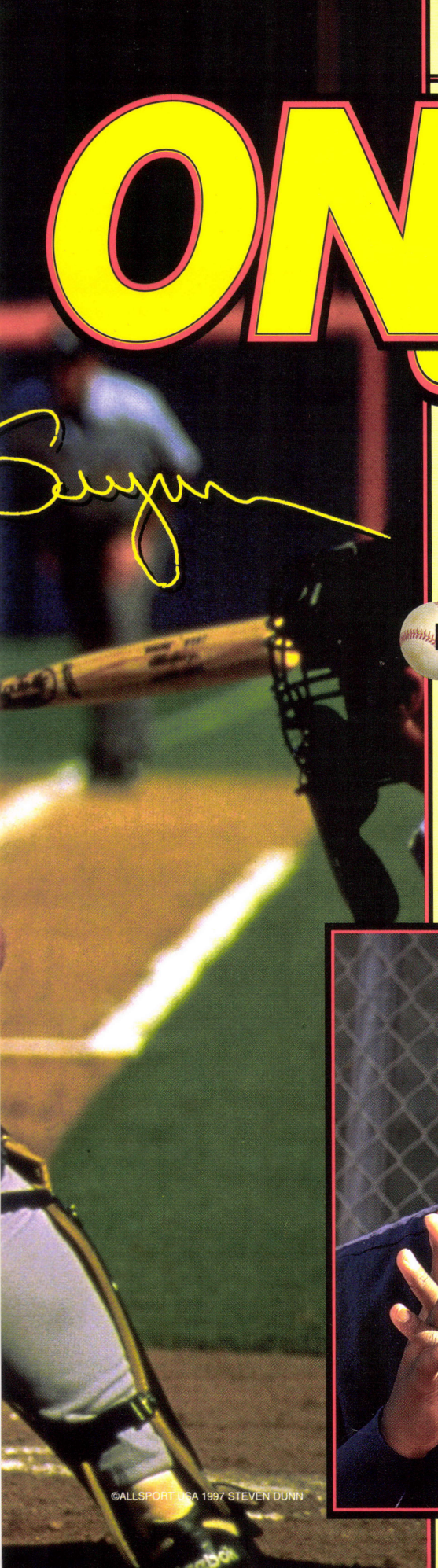
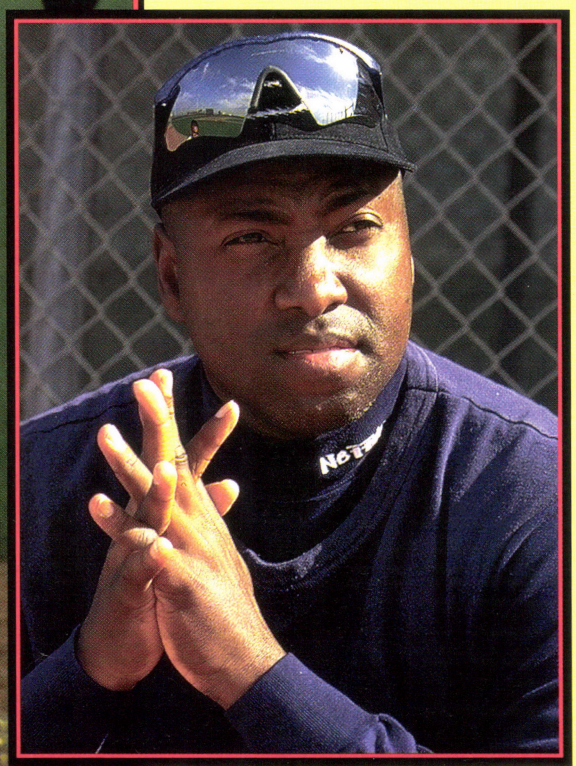
By Todd Mowatt



This season Tony Gwynn has a big reason to grin. Not only is he coming off a season in which he won his seventh batting title in his career, he also tempted fate by playing with what turned out to be a career-threatening achilles heel injury. But the baseball gods smiled on Gwynn and gave one of the sport's best players a second chance to chase the .400 season batting mark set by Ted Williams, Ty Cobb and Roger Hornsby. A mark he came close to breaking during the 1995 season.



Gwynn doesn't just know how to swing a bat, he also knows his way around a Sony PlayStation and is a huge fan of video games. He not only plays quite often at home but also while on the road with his Padre teammates. He acts as the technical support guru and his official title is "the cable guy" during road trips. He is the man when it comes to helping his teammates disconnect the cable in their hotel rooms and hooking up their video game systems.

"Sometimes the housekeeping staffs see me messing with the TVs. Sometimes they look at me as though I am trying to tape Spectravision movies. It gets so crazy in our clubhouse that when we are on the road, guys stay up until three or four in the morning with their hockey jerseys on playing NHL Hockey. The next day they show up at the ballpark with their jerseys still on and look as though they haven't had that much sleep.

At home I play with my son (Anthony) and for a while I could beat him at NBA Live and Triple Play 97. But last year at the All-Star game in Philadelphia we played Triple Play 97 and he beat me soundly. From that point on he has had my number. He isn't shy about telling anyone who will listen that he continuously kicks my butt. Last year at Christmastime it was so great to walk into a Toys 'R' Us and see Triple Play 97 with my face on the box. People kept coming up to me and saying, 'Tony we love your game, man. Your game is great.' Then there were the calls from friends and relatives who wanted copies of the game.

This year I see my job with EA Sports as

a coach, guiding them and giving them some details about what it's like hitting; what my mindset is and what I am looking to do; how I look at the defense and make my adjustments—stuff like that. I love talking about hitting. You can make hitting as easy as you want or as difficult as you want. I want to keep it simple. I look at it as if an 8-year-old (player of Triple Play) was about go up to the plate and before stepping into the batter's box he was to turn to me and ask, 'What should I do?' I would tell him to see the ball, hit it and run like hell."

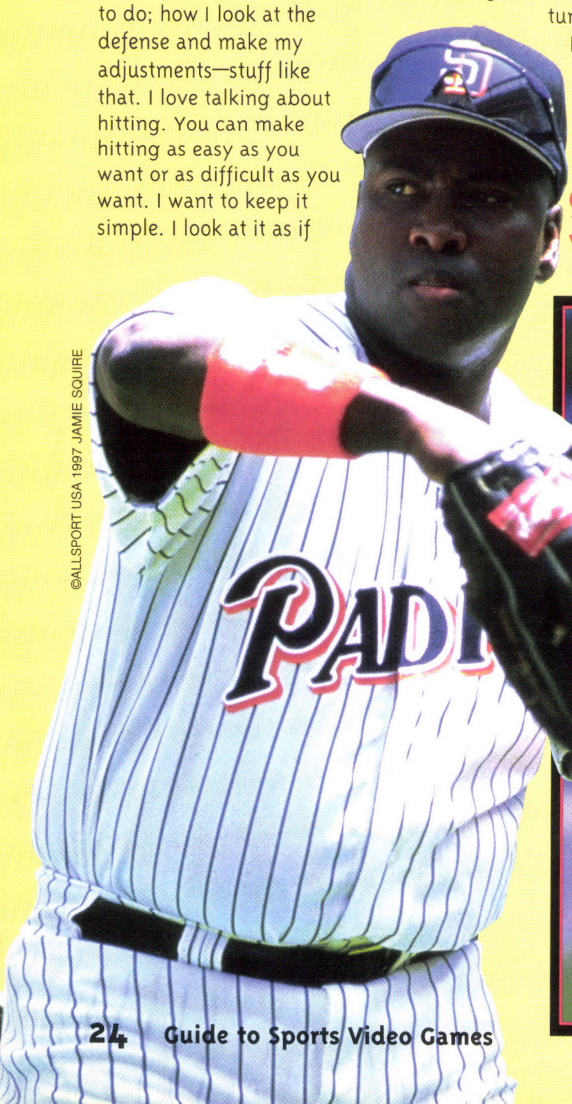
We even asked him about his feelings about playing baseball video games during the season.

"Usually I don't play baseball video games during the season. Usually I stick with golf and basketball, because often I will make adjustments when I play the (video) game that might mess with my timing when I get up to the plate. But that was last year. This year I might give Triple Play 98 a try during the season."

Despite his enormous success, Tony Gwynn still considers himself a student of the game. He still watches tapes of himself at the plate and breaks down his swing, constantly trying to improve it.

"Watching the video just reinforces what you were thinking during that at-bat. There are a lot of great pitchers in the league and as a hitter you have to be prepared for whatever they throw at you. To me video is the biggest help there is. Lots of hitters think they know themselves, but they really don't. By looking at a video of an at-bat after a game, you can really learn about yourself. What balls you handle what balls you don't; what part of the plate you cover, what part you don't. Video reinforces that for me. Good hitters will have a bad at-bat and make the adjustments the very next at-bat; an average hitter will make the adjustments the next day. I'm not saying

During the season I don't play baseball video games, because it messes with my timing. This year I might play TP98 during the season.



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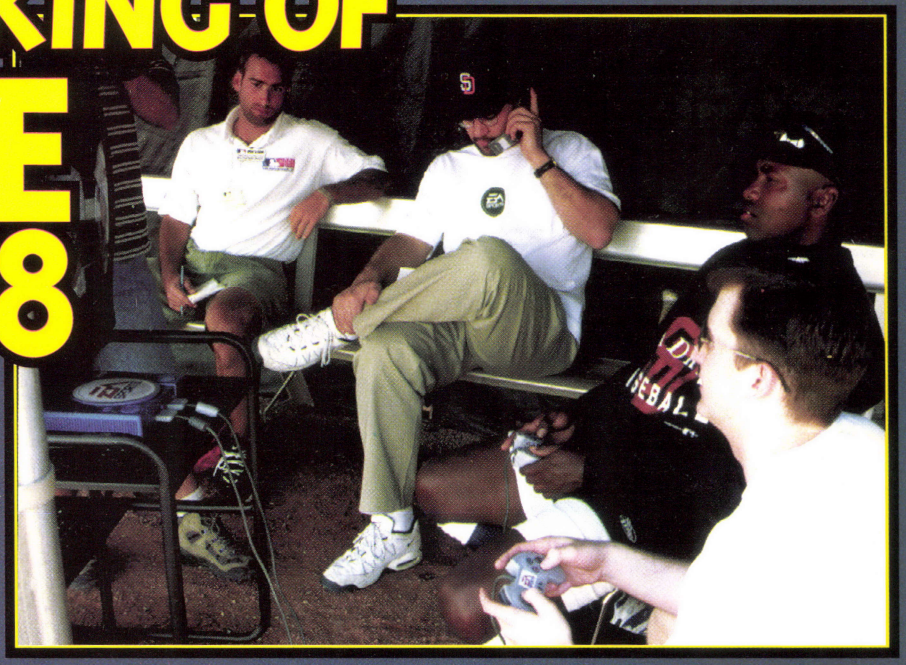
THE MAKING OF TRIPLE PLAY 98



Tony Gwynn is no ordinary baseball player. He's one of the best hitters in baseball. He's confident, but not cocky. Gwynn is also an avid video game player.

Major League franchises weren't the only ones holding Spring Training sessions down in Phoenix. The EA Sports crew also had their team in Phoenix tweaking the gameplay mechanics of this year's baseball game for the PlayStation. Last year EA Sports hoisted the baseball trophy for having the best baseball game of the year. They are hoping to repeat this year. On this day they were tweaking the batter's stance and the way he follows through with his swing in the game.

Gwynn walked them through everything he sees as he stands in the batter's box and explained every aspect of hitting, including the all-important way he sees the ball leave the opposing pitcher's hand during the follow-through. Duncan Magee and Chuck Osieja of EA Canada, two members of the team, were down at Spring Training along with Shelly Eckenroth.

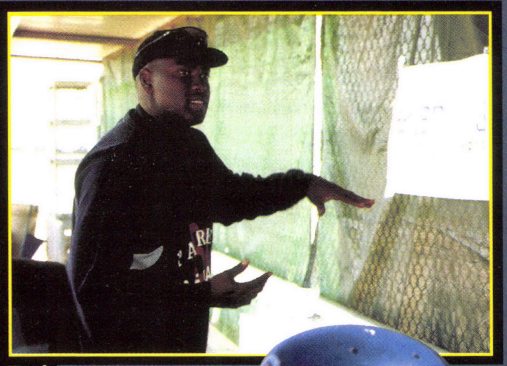
"We're trying to make as realistic a game as possible," Chuck said. "We have Tony Gwynn, one of the best hitters in the game of baseball as a resource to help us get the little things right." Chuck Osieja was one of the designers of Blue Sky software's World Series Baseball for the Sega Genesis.

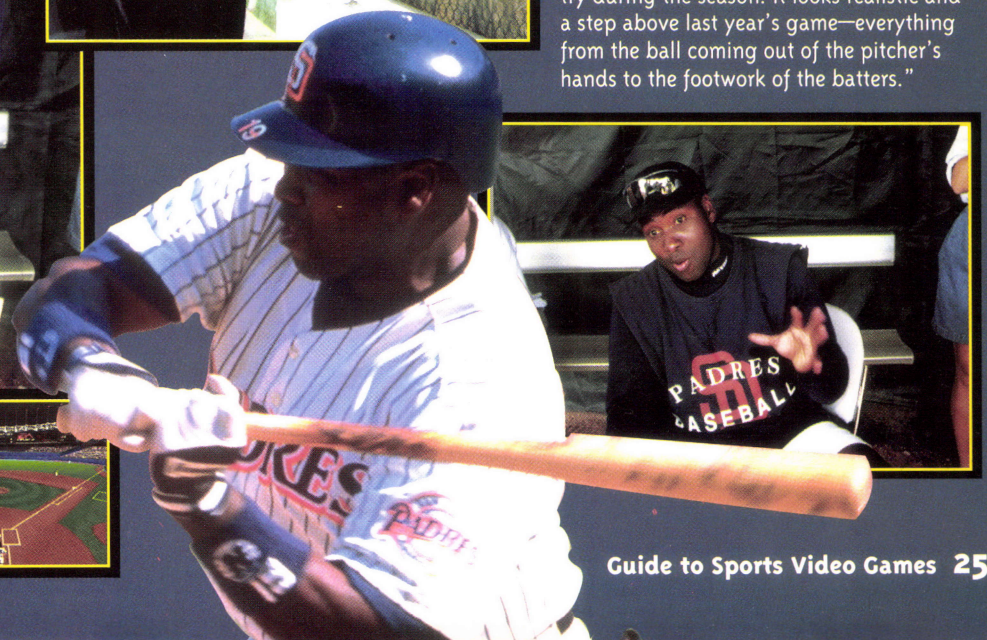
This year's game has polygonal players. The gameplay is solid and yes, in this year's game you can hit doubles and triples off of the wall just like in real baseball.

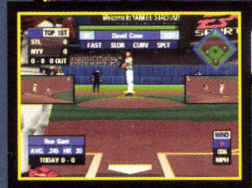
The addition of Chuck Osieja and a few other changes in the already deep EA Canada bench helped shore up some of the weaknesses that were apparent in last year's version of Triple Play.

Having input from one of the greatest hitters who has ever played the game of baseball gives Triple Play 98 a lot of credibility.

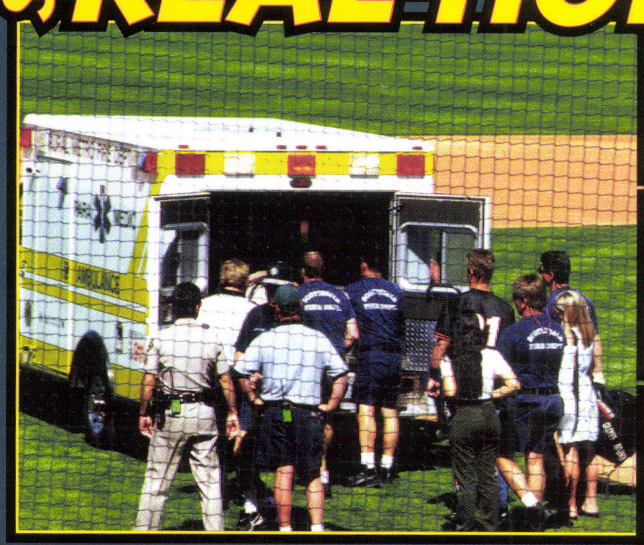
"It's been a real treat watching these guys. They are committed to getting things right," Gwynn said. "Triple Play 98 does the little things right and I might even give it a try during the season. It looks realistic and a step above last year's game—everything from the ball coming out of the pitcher's hands to the footwork of the batters."

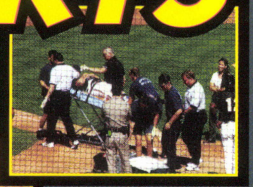


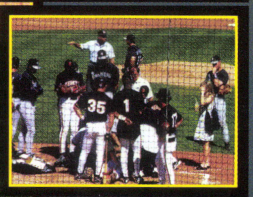


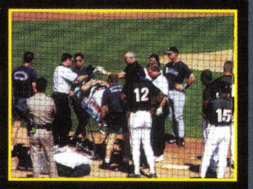


SO REAL IT HURTS









The 1997 baseball season is well under way. But one of the scariest moments of the 1997 Spring Training session happened when big unit Randy Johnson threw a 95-mph fastball and connected with J.T. Snow's face.

We were on hand to witness the aftermath of the incident. The fans heckled the emergency team as it took them 25 minutes to respond when the Scottsdale hospital was right across the street from the Giants' facility.

After the game a group of grumpy Giants lead by that perennial baseball public relations pitchman Barry Bonds grumbled into the EA Sports room to take a look at Triple Play 98.

In his defense he and the rest of the Giants team were worried about their fallen team member, who has since recovered from his injuries and is back playing.

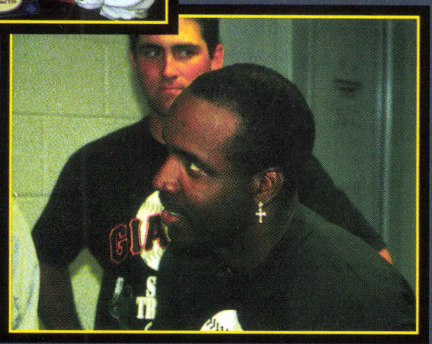
But Barry was Barry on this day and he wasn't all that interested in playing video games even though the Giants beat the Mariners.

Shawn Estes and Darryl Hamilton were among the San Francisco Giants team members who played against EA Sports' Triple Play 98 producer Chuck Osieja and product marketing manager Duncan Magee.

There were lots of other players who popped their heads in and made fun of some of their teammates who looked like they were in better shape in the video game than they did in real life.

"The game looks real, the animations in the game have the real numbers and logos on the jerseys. It's pretty incredible. They actually look like real players," Shawn Estes said to one of his teammates.

It was a good way for EA Sports to judge how good their game is by getting feedback from other big-league players.



EA Sports went through a little Spring Training session of their own as they let Barry Bonds and other big-leaguers play Triple Play 98 and gauged their (positive) reactions to the game.

that what I do is going to work for everybody else. All I'm saying is watching the videotape and the other things I do work for me. This is what I do, this is how I do it and why I do it. If it works for somebody else, then great. The one thing about hitting no matter what type of hitter you are, the basics are still the basics. You have to get your foot down, you have to get your hands in the hitting position. You have to be in a balanced position and you have to take a balanced swing. If you do those things consistently you are going to hit like Ken Griffey, Barry Bonds, your Frank Thomases, your Albert Belles. All of these guys can hit for average and hit for power. They can hit the ball out of the ballpark and drive in runs. No matter who you talk to, the basics apply to everybody. Even the great hitters throughout history have had the same type of mechanics."

We also asked Tony who are some of the toughest pitchers he faces.

"The (Tom) Glavines and the (Greg) Madduxes are tough. They are the type of guys who have two or three pitches and they can throw at will for strikes. Atlanta's staff is the best in the business at that. Smoltz is the only one who is overpowering. The other guys are real crafty. With those guys location is big; if you get a ball that's in, you can really spank it. Baseball is still a game where pitching is the name of the game. If a team has two or three quality pitchers, then they are going to be better than the average team. When you have guys pitching who can put the ball where they want to and keep hitters off balance, the advantage is always going to go to the team with the pitching no matter how many sluggers a particular team has."

Gwynn is one of the best hitters in baseball. But there are still a few players he enjoys watching at the plate.

"I really enjoying watching Barry Bonds hit. He in my opinion is the prototypical '90s hitter. He hits home runs, he drives in runs, he steals bases. He saves games on the defensive end, he does everything. If there's a player out there who I would want to be like, it would be him."

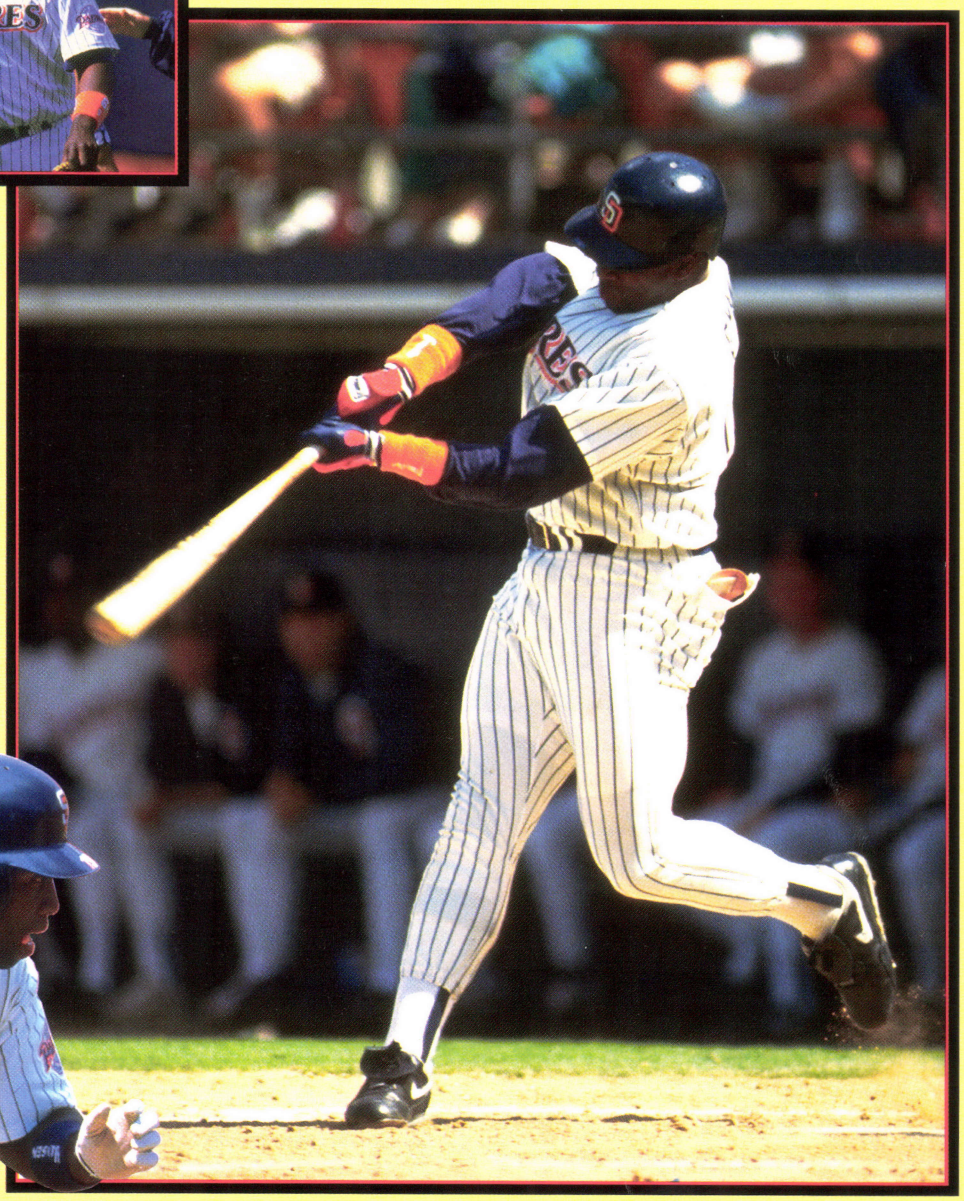
Gwynn is a humble player, always working on his game. During the off-season he lost 20 lbs. and is currently in the best shape of his career.

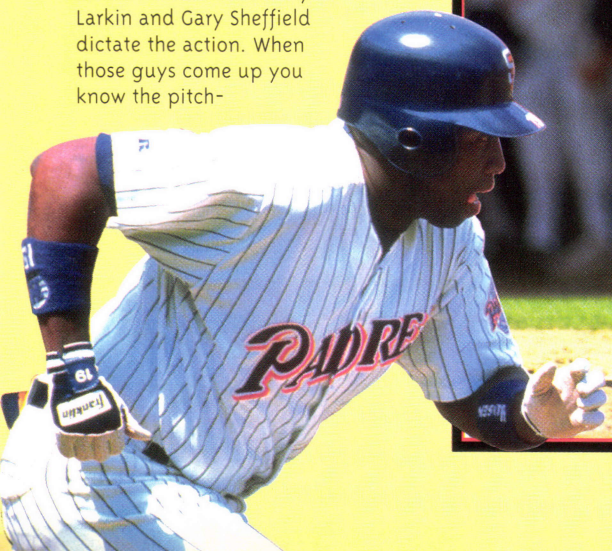
"This game is a lot of fun to play. I love being the type of player that I am, but if I could add anything to it, it would be the power part of it. Having the ability to hit the ball out of the ballpark and then on the next at-bat slap it down the left field line for a double. If you're a hitter who's worth your salt, then that's what you want to be able to do. As a hitter you want to be able to go up there and make the pitcher think that no matter what he throws you or what he does, you are still going to be able to get on base or drive in a run. There are a couple of other guys besides Barry Bonds that do that. Barry Larkin and Gary Sheffield dictate the action. When those guys come up you know the pitcher is thinking, 'I can't make a mistake,' and the defenders are saying, 'Oh God, here comes so and so.' As a hitter that's the position you want to be in."

Good hitters will have a bad at-bat and make the adjustments the next at-bat; an average hitter will make the adjustments the next day.

Gwynn almost never made it to Spring Training this year, as his "slight" achilles heel tear ended up being a 30 percent tear. If it had torn away, that would have been the end of his baseball career.

"I feel very lucky, because the injury I played with last year was one of those career-ending injuries. If I would have torn it, I wouldn't be playing baseball today. I feel fortunate that I made it through last year. At the same time I love to play and when you love to play, you don't really think about the injuries. You just pretty much go out there and do what you need to do. I feel fortunate to be here this year and be in the position where I can help my team. If I had to do it all over again knowing what I know now, I probably wouldn't have played. Anybody who knows me knows that if I don't play I'm not a happy guy. I love what I do. I love the game of baseball."

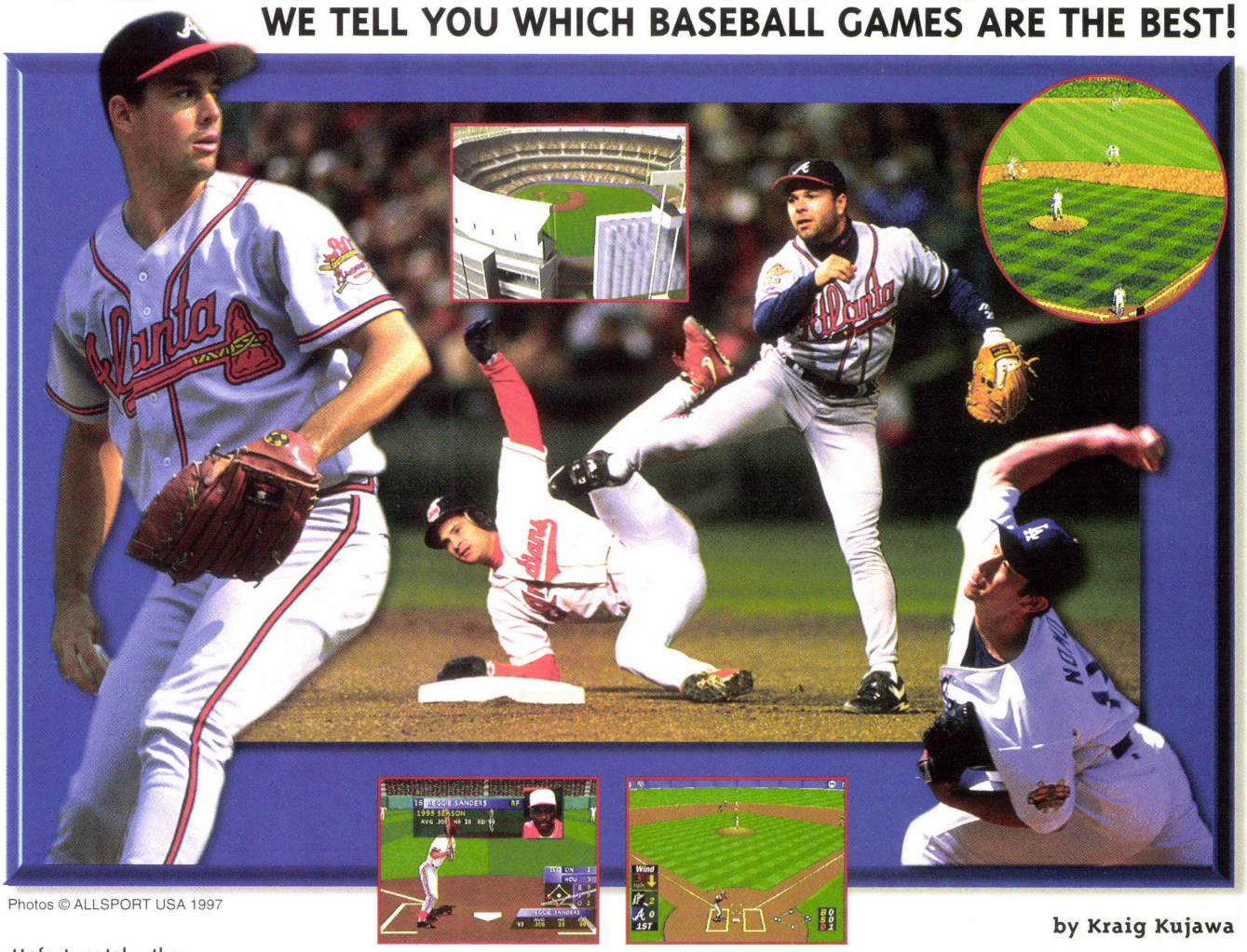




DARE2COMPARE

baseball

WE TELL YOU WHICH BASEBALL GAMES ARE THE BEST!

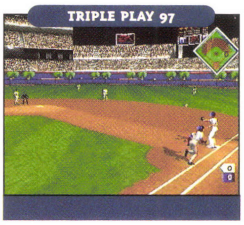


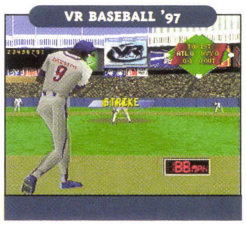
Photos © ALLSPORT USA 1997

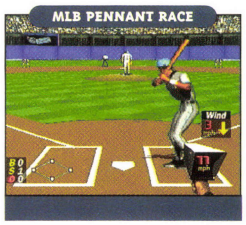
by Kraig Kujawa

Unfortunately, the first generation of 32-Bit baseball games were pretty disappointing as a whole. Were it not for Sega's two outstanding action-packed World Series Baseball titles and EA Sports' above-average, more cerebral Triple Play 97, this whole genre might have been a complete disaster.

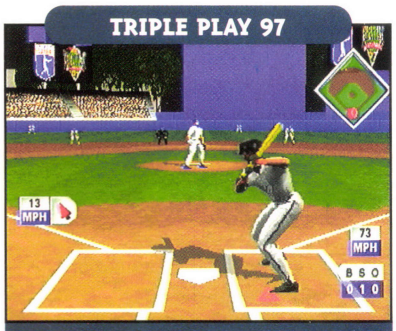
THE STARTING LINEUP







DARE2COMPARE baseball



The most complete package

Photos ©ALLSPORT USA 1997

"Very Good"

Triple Play 97

PlayStation

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: Triple Play is the best PlayStation baseball game on the market, but to be honest, there isn't a whole lot of tough competition. There is definitely plenty of room for improvement.

STRENGTHS: Like many other EA Sports games, Triple Play 97 is loaded with features. In fact, it probably has the most options, features and statistics ever offered in a baseball video game. A variety of pitches and a ton of coaching decisions add plenty of strategic and realistic gameplay elements. The stadiums are very authentic, and the sound is well done, giving the game a nice ambience.

WEAKNESSES: While being realistic, Triple Play could use some fine-tuning. The animation of the baseball players is way too choppy, and is especially hindering when you're up to bat. The control is also a little too stiff and complicated in some facets of gameplay.

WHAT'S NEW: Well, this is the first 32-Bit Triple Play, and it isn't nearly as flawed as the previous 16-Bit versions. This is a commendable first attempt.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: If you look in the hotel bedroom windows in the back of Toronto's SkyDome, you can see two people...err, "hitting a home run." Seriously though, the stadium flybys in this game are truly a sight to behold.

"Solid"

VR Baseball '97

PlayStation

Publisher: Interplay
Developer: VR Sports
Difficulty: Moderate

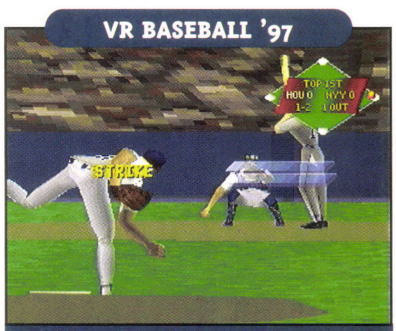
IN A NUTSHELL: More than any other sports title in recent memory, this one polarized the office. One faction hated it, the other loved it. We're taking the middle ground, and giving it an average rating.

STRENGTHS: All of the real stadiums, teams and players are licensed and included in the game. The graphics are good in some spots like the stadiums, but the players' uniforms don't look much like the real thing. Nonetheless, gameplay (and the crucial pitcher/batter confrontation) does have a decent feel to it.

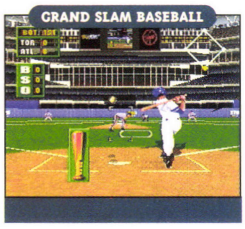
WEAKNESSES: The graphics are choppy, the frame rate is bad at times and gameplay is sluggish. The game seems unfinished, which is strange since it has been worked on for so long. VR Sports could have pushed the envelope more than just having some fancy camera angles.

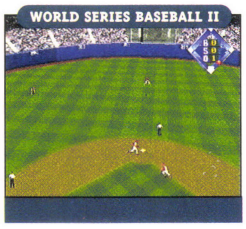
WHAT'S NEW: This is the first version of the game.

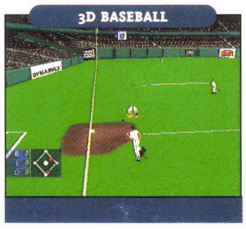
WHAT'S UNIQUE: VR Baseball has been in development for two years. In that time, the game was totally redesigned, and the Saturn version was scrapped.

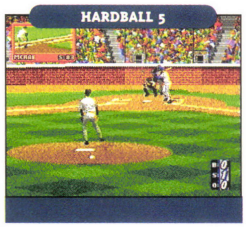


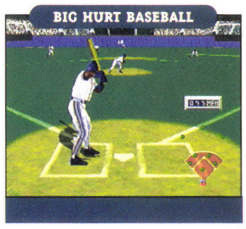
It caused controversy at the office

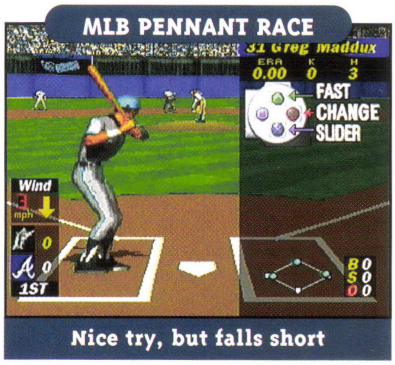












Nice try, but falls short

"Solid"

MLB Pennant Race

PlayStation

Publisher: Sony
Developer: Sony
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: Sony's first attempt at a baseball game reminds me a lot of Triple Play's diverse design. It attempts to offer something to both arcade and simulation baseball fans, but fails to deliver successfully to either.

STRENGTHS: The sounds are fantastic. Great organ music, game sounds and the play-by-play announcer is also very good. Plenty of gameplay options and features are also available, making the depth of this game considerable.

WEAKNESSES: The flow of the game is too slow, and the graphics could have been better. Choppy player animations and long load times also plague this game. All of the pieces were in place to make a great game, but it falls short of being polished and fun.

WHAT'S NEW: Pennant Race is a new game, and Sony is hard at work making the next version which they promise will be much better than this one.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The morphing team logos at the Main Selection Screen look pretty cool.

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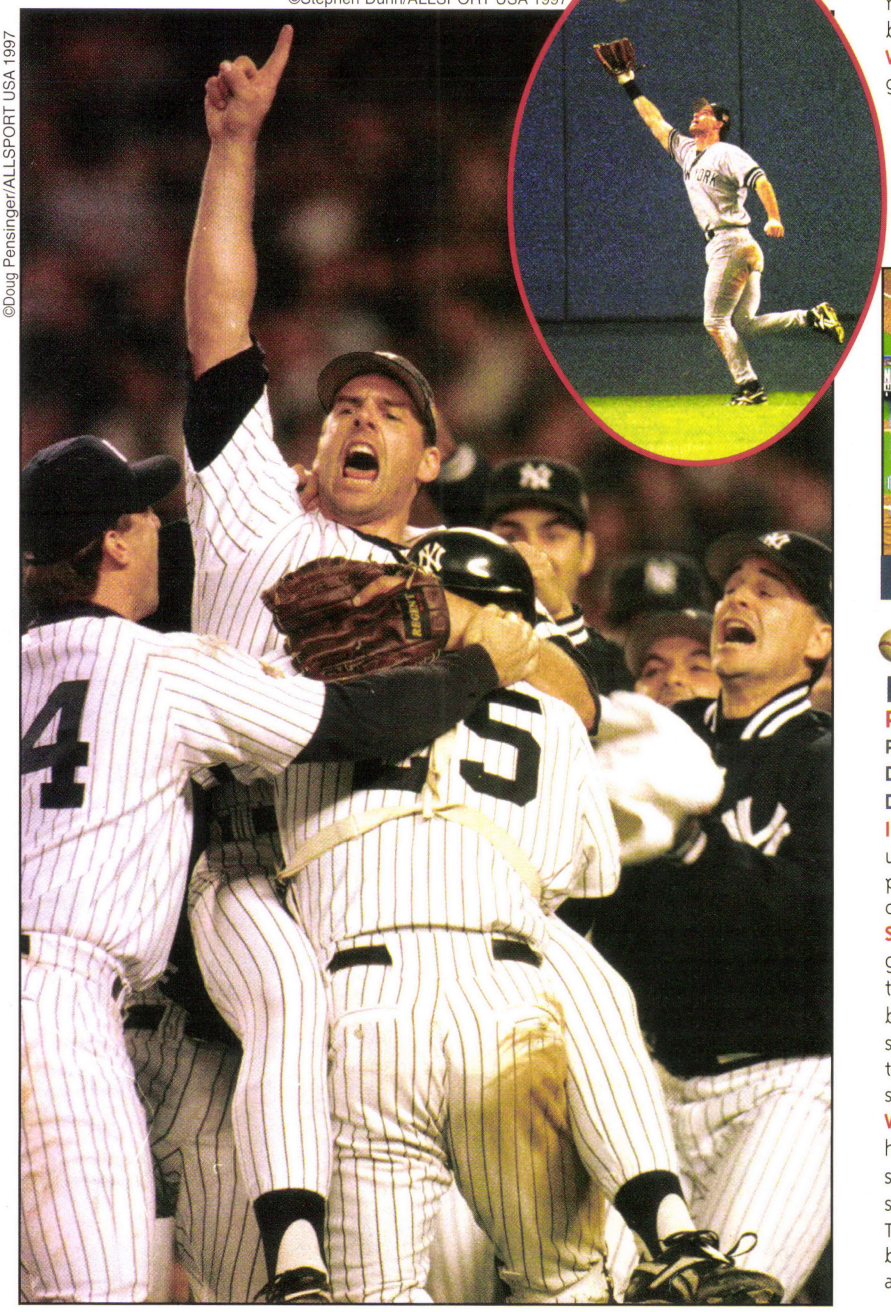
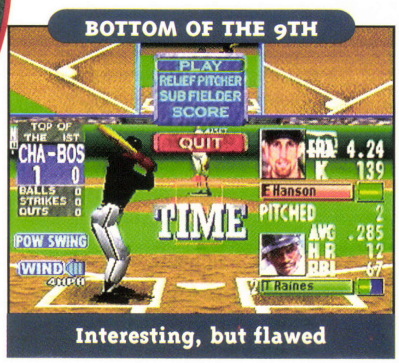




Interesting, but flawed

"Weak"

Bottom of the 9th

PlayStation

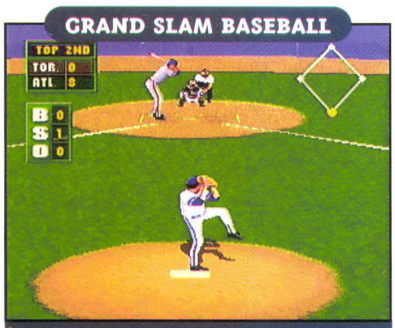
Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Difficulty: Hard

IN A NUTSHELL: This is a very unorthodox baseball game. Some people swear by its gameplay, but I'm one of the ones who isn't convinced.

STRENGTHS: Smoothly animated graphics and gameplay mechanics that are a little unorthodox. It should be pointed out that there must be something in the game that appeals to some people, as it has gotten some semblance of a loyal following.

WEAKNESSES: The graphics are now hopelessly outdated by PlayStation standards, which is understandable since the game is roughly a year old. The players animate well, but look very blocky and aren't very detailed. It is also a difficult game to learn, almost

frustrating at times. Also, there are no real teams, although the real MLB players are included. On a lighter note, boy are the menus ugly! They're bathed in these sickening pastel colors, and will probably give you a headache.
WHAT'S NEW: This is the first version of the game, and Konami is already preparing to launch the sequel.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: The batting and pitching interface is very innovative, but somewhat hard to get a handle on.



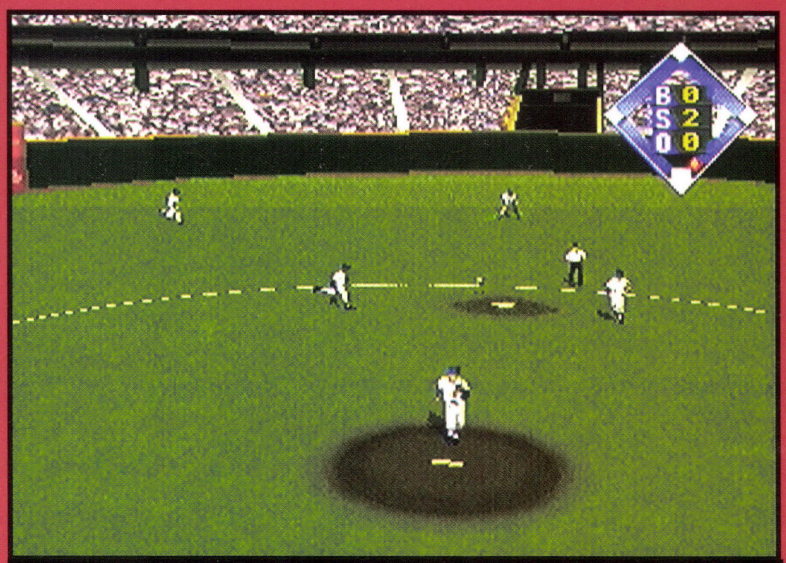
Not great, but innovative

"Weak"

Grand Slam Baseball

PlayStation
Publisher: Virgin
Developer: Burst
Difficulty: Hard
SLANT: Grand Slam is kinda fun, and is probably entertaining enough to at least warrant a rental. It probably doesn't have enough depth to keep gamers interested for very long, though.
STRENGTHS: This game really grows on you, but only to a certain point. At first it's not really impressive, but once you master many of its key control elements, it becomes pretty entertaining. This is probably due to the uniqueness of its batting and pitching interface. Either that, or I'm just weird. It's possible, you know.
WEAKNESSES: Virgin claims the graphics were motion-captured, but I fail to see how it benefits this game—maybe they used replacement players for the motion-capture. The animation is choppy and the shabby players aren't all that impressive to look at either. They are really low-color and lack any amount of detail. Grand Slam also lacks the in-depth features that other baseball games provide.
WHAT'S NEW: Since this is the premiere of Grand Slam Baseball, everything's

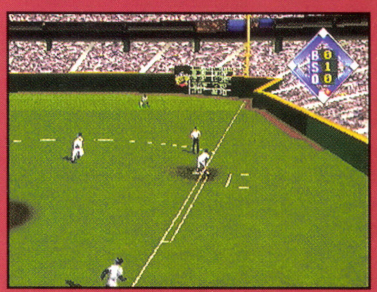
editors' choice
World Series Baseball II

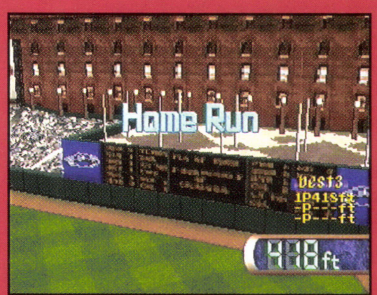

Sega's World Series has consistently won the 32-Bit pennant

World Series Baseball II

"Awesome"

Saturn
Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Difficulty: Easy
IN A NUTSHELL: As far as entertainment value, this is the best 32-Bit baseball game, period. WSB II may not have extensive features and options, but is fiendishly addictive and fun.
STRENGTHS: The most novice of players can quickly learn and enjoy this game. Precise control, fast-paced action and compelling gameplay make this game the best baseball title overall. Even without all of the statistics, bells and whistles, hardcore simulation fans can appreciate the entertainment value of the Saturn's best sports game.
WEAKNESSES: There are very few, given the audience that Sega's title is aiming for. There aren't nearly as many options and statistics as the other baseball games, but that isn't what this game attempts to deliver.
WHAT'S NEW: The changes between this and last year's versions are very minor. Aside from the obvious roster updates, technical things such as the ball physics and the game engine have been improved, along with the player animations. Also, many of the bugs in the first 32-Bit version of the game have been corrected.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: No 32-Bit baseball game is as fast-paced and fun as WSB II. This baseball game is one of the best reasons to own a Saturn.

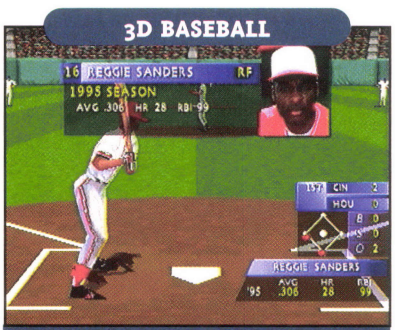




How The Features Stack Up

▼ GAMES / FEATURES ▶	MLB Teams	MLBA Players	Real Stadiums	Home Run Derby	Variable Weather	Full Season	Trade Players	Create Players	Number of Players	All-Star Game	Difficulty Settings
Triple Play 97	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1-8	Yes	Yes
VR Baseball '97	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	1-2	Yes	Yes
MLB Pennant Race	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1-2	No	Yes
Bottom of the 9th	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1-2	No	No
Grand Slam Baseball	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	1-2	No	Yes
World Series Baseball II	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	1-2	Yes	Yes
3D Baseball	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1-2	No	No
HardBall 5	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1-2	No	Yes
F.T. Big Hurt Baseball	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	1-2	Yes	Yes

new! Woo-hoo!
WHAT'S UNIQUE: The batting and pitching interfaces are one-of-a-kind. Grand Slam is just an odd baseball title.



The fun game that lacks features

"Solid"

3D Baseball
PlayStation/Saturn
Publisher: Crystal Dynamics
Developer: Crystal Dynamics
Difficulty: Moderate
IN A NUTSHELL: 3D Baseball is a fun game, but it's lacking so many essential things that even the worst baseball games possess, it is simply impossible to recommend to buy. It might be worth a rental.
STRENGTHS: 3D Baseball is a great-looking 3-D sports game. The players look good and animate fluidly, unlike many other games that take the same approach. The straightforward, simplistic gameplay is reminiscent of World Series. The color commentary by Van Earl Wright adds a little humor.
WEAKNESSES: As entertaining a game that 3D Baseball is, there are many things that push it into mediocrity. There aren't many features, and even worse, only three stadiums are included—all fake. You can play in renowned stadiums such as "Crystal Yards" and "Willis Park." What were they thinking?
WHAT'S NEW: This is the first 3D Baseball, and I look forward to seeing how they improve the next one (if there is a next one).
WHAT'S UNIQUE: Only three stadiums to play in. That's not only unique, but it's just plain dumb.

"Sucks"

HardBall 5
PlayStation
Publisher: Accolade
Developer: Accolade
Difficulty: Moderate
IN A NUTSHELL: This game shouldn't have been made. That pretty much sums up my feelings on it. Accolade deserves a good spanking for this one—they can do better.
STRENGTHS: Not many at all. You have to look real hard to find them, that's for sure. In fact, looking for the good things in this game may prove more entertaining than the game itself. But seriously, HardBall 5 has a lot of managerial options and statistics, but nothing over the norm. The computer intelligence benefits from the previous revisions of HardBall, and is probably better than many baseball games.
WEAKNESSES: This may not only contain the worst graphics seen on a 32-Bit

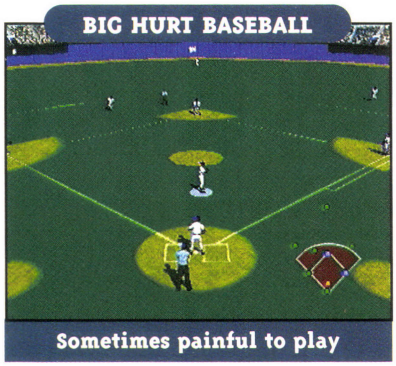
Oh my, is this hard to look at

Stolen Bases
Even if you don't have a powerful hitting lineup, you can compensate for it by having a good running team. Grabbing two or three bases with a good base runner can prove just as effective as a muscle-bound bat-wielder that hits doubles and triples for a living. It also makes for a more versatile offense and a more rangy defense.

baseball game, but perhaps even the worst ever on the PlayStation. This grotesque graphical mess looks like HardBall was recklessly ported from the PC. Let's just skip the gory details—this game is a total wreck.

WHAT'S NEW: Bad graphics, bad gameplay, bad idea.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: May hold the dubious title of "Worst display of graphics on a PlayStation sports title."



Sometimes painful to play

"Weak"

Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball

PlayStation

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana
Difficulty: Moderate

SLANT: Acclaim's Frank Thomas Baseball tries hard to be an action-packed game much like Sega's World Series, but falls way short.

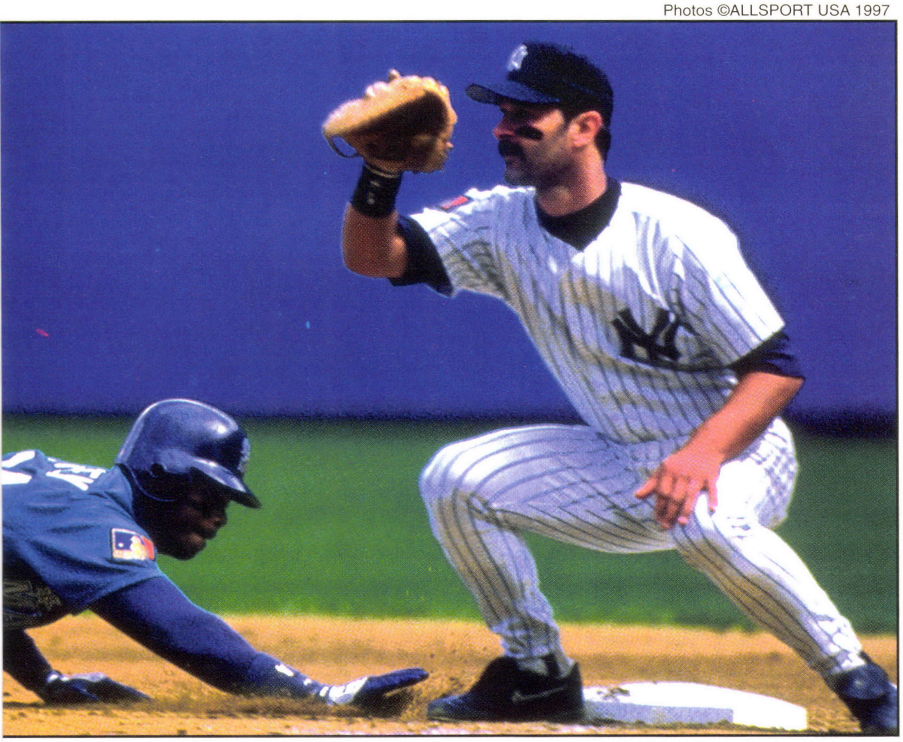
STRENGTHS: For an action-oriented sports game, Frank Thomas has plenty of options that include the All-Star game, Batting Practice and several other play modes.

WEAKNESSES: You can tell that this game is supposed to be fast-paced, but the gameplay is too sluggish in parts to make it work. The batting and pitching feels too unresponsive, and as a result they aren't very much fun. Often times you'll hit the button to swing at a certain time only for the bat to actually swing moments later. The real stadiums look somewhat like their counterparts, but lack any amount of detail. The announcing in the game is also some of the worst out of all the baseball games that do have play-by-play. The load times are very apparent.

WHAT'S NEW: This was the first 32-Bit version of the Frank Thomas series of Big Hurt baseball games. Interestingly enough, the next version of the game, due out in late summer of this year, will be entitled All-Star Baseball featuring Frank Thomas. Is that a demotion?

WHAT'S UNIQUE: Home runs in this game often become as plentiful as base hits. Especially if you use the Big Hurt himself. Gee, do you think they may have juiced his stats?

Photos ©ALLSPORT USA 1997



Looking to the Future

Despite the fact that the first crop of 32-Bit baseball games were somewhat disappointing, it looks like game companies are learning the error of their ways.

First and foremost, EA's Triple Play 98 is nearing completion and is already looking like a definite improvement over the original. The major enhancement is that the 2-D players are being replaced with motion-captured 3-D ones. This facelift looks successful so far, as many of the players look astoundingly like their real counterparts.

Triple Play 98 is promising

The leader of the pack is World Series Baseball, and the first screens of the latest edition are starting to surface. Like Triple Play, Sega's WSB will now receive a 3-D facelift. It'll be interesting to see if the legendary gameplay will be impacted by the new polygonal graphics.

Bottom of the 9th '97

Also on deck is Konami's Bottom of the 9th '97 which is getting a major graphics overhaul, in addition to many new options and features. With any luck, Konami will add the features that this quirky baseball game desperately needs to become a major contender.

Top Strategies to Score With Video Baseball

Batting

Don't assume the pre-assigned batting order is the best available. If you're familiar with your team and the team you're playing, you might be able to tweak the order a bit to your advantage. Obviously each game is different, but try to learn the batting physics so you can get used to pulling the ball when necessary. Finally, when you're behind and need to get runners into scoring position, don't be afraid to sacrifice a bunt to get a player to second or third base. Just make sure you don't have two outs before you do it.

Pitching

There are a few obvious rules for aspiring Cy Young winners and their coaches. For one, don't bring in your star closer in the third inning when you're in a jam. It just ain't smart. Next, be sure to throw a variety of pitches. The batter isn't dumb—if you start getting repetitive, he's going to read you and knock one out of the park. Finally, know when to say when. Even if you've got a no-hitter going into the eighth, if your pitcher is completely worn out, take him out!

Fielding

Nearly every baseball game allows the players in the field to dive or jump for the ball. Use this to your advantage, but be careful not to overdo it, because a missed dive can usually result in the loss of a lot of precious time. Additionally, be sure to know your controller configuration well, because you'll need to be quick on the draw to pull double plays and foil your opponent's attempts at stealing. And lastly, be sure to play your outfield according to how monstrous (or puny) the batter is.

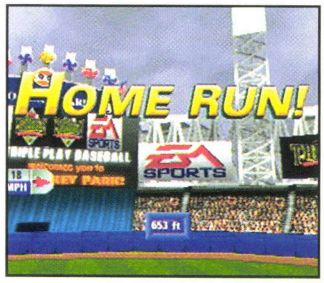
The Playbook

Cool Baseball Tips, Tricks and Strategies You Need to Score Runs

Triple Play 97
Sony PlayStation

Hit a Home Run Every Time

With this trick you'll hit a home run every time you enter the code. During a game or in the Home Run Derby, press and hold R1 + R2 + L1 + L2. While still holding those buttons, quickly press Up, Up, Triangle, Triangle, Up, Up, X, X. You will hear a chime if you did the trick correctly. This trick is hard to do and may take repeated attempts.



You will have to enter the code once for each home run you want to hit, but it never fails.

World Series Baseball II
Sega Saturn

Easy Strikeouts

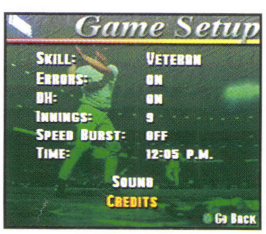
If you're a right-handed pitcher going against a left-handed hitter, there's a technique which you can use to get a strikeout almost 99 percent of the time. The first pitch can be anything you want but make sure it's a strike. Afterward, use the Right Shift button and shift as far as possible to the right side (same side as your left-handed hitter). Press C and as soon as your throw begins, move your d-pad slowly to the left, outside his batting range. Do this twice and you're guaranteed a strikeout at any level. Even the Legends level falls for this.

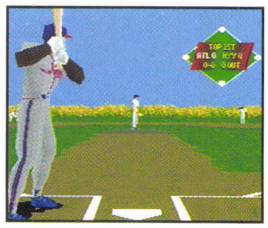
Trick Plays

VR Baseball '97
Sony PlayStation

If You Build It, They Will Come

To play in the "Field of Corn," enter the game Option Screen from any mode of play. Move the highlight to Credits, and then press Square, Circle, Square, Circle, Triangle. You will then be taken to the previous menu, and you will notice that the stadium name has a green color to it. This will indicate that you have entered the code correctly. You may then start the game as you normally would, and the Field of Corn will be the stadium you are playing in.

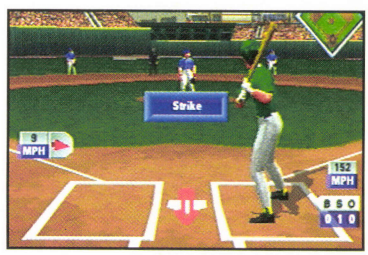




Triple Play 97
Sony PlayStation

Super Players

For a super batter, create a custom player named "Erick Kiss" and trade him to any team you wish. Erik can hit the ball out of the park with ease. For a super pitcher, create a custom player named "Jon Spencer." Trade him from the free agents to any team you want. Jon can throw up to 159 mph pitches!



Paint the corners...

...or he'll spray the bleachers.

ALL 28 3-D RENDERED
MAJOR LEAGUE™ STADIUMS

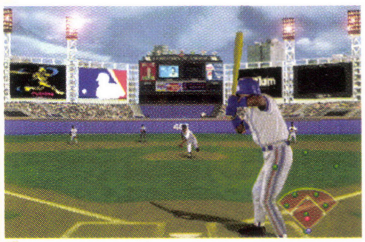
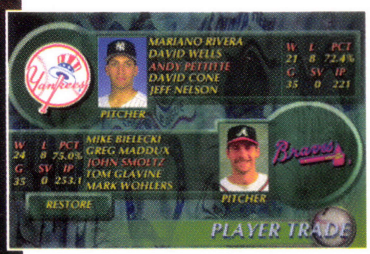


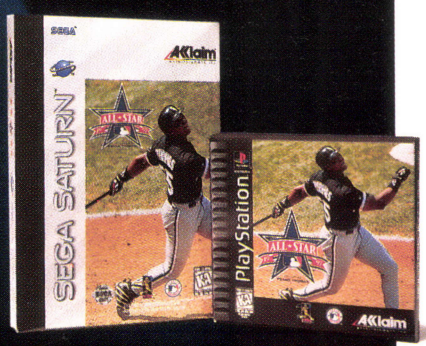
PHOTO REALISTIC
PLAYER GRAPHICS



TRADE PLAYERS
BETWEEN TEAMS

Every player will tell you he can hit. Or pitch. Or field. It's how you put it together that matters.

All-Star™ Baseball '97 Featuring Frank Thomas™ delivers the complete package. Fast. Intuitive. Multi-talented. Complete. Just like an All-Star.



ALL★STAR 19 97
FEATURING FRANK THOMAS

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SIMPSON
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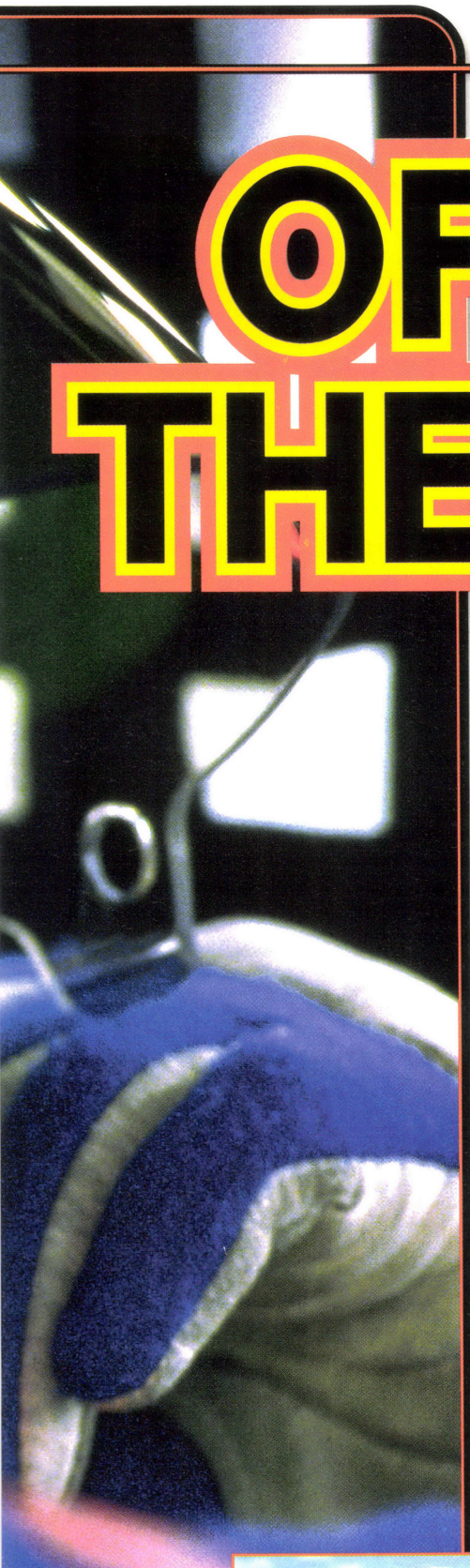


OFF TO THE RACES

EA Sports is retooling their hot Andretti Racing "engine" for NASCAR 98

By Gary Mollohan

Since the release of the first John Madden Football for the Sega Genesis, EA Sports has been known for developing some the most realistic sports video games in the world. Having tackled all the major team sports—football, hockey, basketball, etc.—EA finally took a shot at one of the country's most rapidly rising sports: auto racing. The result was Andretti Racing, one of last year's most enjoyable and accurate racing simulators. Gamers loved the option of driving either Formula 1 or stock cars, and Andretti's racing "engine" was hailed as one of the most finely balanced ever; however, as anyone who's ever attended a race will tell you, NASCAR is a sport quite unlike any other. Its fans are some of the most loyal and demanding anywhere, and they had a few suggestions for EA Sports. EA took these suggestions to heart, and, with additional help from the Andretti family, has gone back to the drawing board for their new stock car game, NASCAR 98.

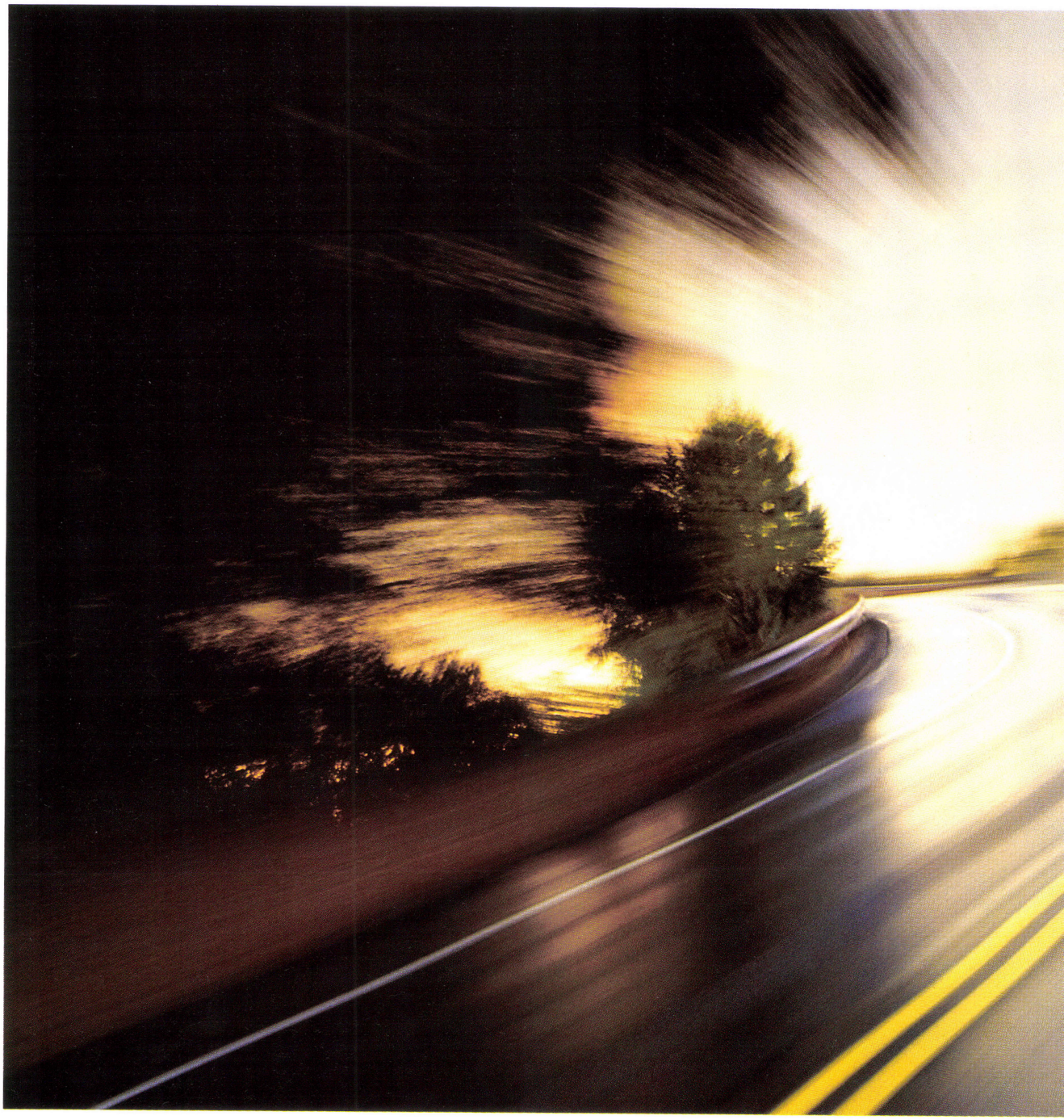
As executive producer Michael Pole recently told us, the first thing racing fans wanted to know was why many of their favorite teams and drivers weren't included in Andretti Racing.

"I think we had some real good success with Andretti," said Pole, "although what the people were crying out for was, 'Where was the real Newman/Haas car? Where was Chip Gnassi, and where was Jimmy Vasser?' So what we decided to do was take it to the next level."

For EA, "the next level" meant including every team, car and driver currently affiliated with NASCAR—no small undertaking, to say the least. As Pole reiterated, NASCAR fans would settle for nothing less.

The next thing EA wanted to do was take advantage of the technological advances that have occurred over the past year. While the hardware is still the same, recent programming advances have allowed skilled PlayStation programmers to work "closer to the metal" than ever, coaxing more and more graphical power out of Sony's two-year-old hardware. As Pole explained, this allowed EA to make substantial improvements in NASCAR 98.

"Last year with Andretti, we were limited to the amount of "skins" (the highly detailed texture maps "painted" on the polygonal car bodies) that we could have on the cars. I think we had a total of seven skins which we had to duplicate throughout. We also only had a grid of 16 drivers. We've upgraded the technology in that it will allow us to have a 24-car field with 24 independent textures on each car, so every single car will be different



THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A TWO-GAME GARAGE.

Lose the pretenders. Rage Racer™ is the king of speed. Nothing captures the realism of street racing like it. Rage Racer is not some retread. It's brand new from the ground up. But please, don't take our word for it. Take one lap. Then you'll know why *Game Fan* calls Rage Racer "the greatest racing game on the planet."

RAGE RACER™

Real. Fast.

on the track. In addition, we've upped the frame rate to over 30 frames per second."

Having beefed up the visuals, the next main objective EA wanted to achieve was to improve their already excellent racing engine. Pole explained that although Andretti was a blast to play, it didn't quite capture the highly physical manner in which NASCAR drivers jockey for position, sometimes as many as four cars wide, as they scream toward a turn.

"If you talk to Indy car drivers, [they] say all NASCAR guys have to do is turn left and they're fine. Well, you know what? Indy cars don't bump and run the way these guys do; there's a lot more going on than just turning left."

To capture this excitement, EA added more mass to their physics models and widened their track designs.

"We needed more track room to negotiate the cars in, because the nature of NASCAR is to have a little bit more of that three- and four-car-wide racing. Some of the Andretti Racing tracks last season wouldn't have allowed for that. You just can't get four wide on those tracks. [In NASCAR 98], we've really made an effort to heighten the entertainment value or the gameplay value by allowing these cars to go four-wide when necessary."

The game has other advancements, too. Where Andretti Racing had only three selectable viewing angles, NASCAR 98 will have six. The game will also have variable weather (including fog and rain), improved artificial intelligence, yellow flags, hidden tracks and a new drafting meter. EA also plans to fully utilize Sony's new analog controller, including its force feedback function, which will allow the gamer to feel the same shocks and jolts a real driver would experience during the course of a race.

There may be other NASCAR games currently on the market, but Electronic Arts believes that once complete, theirs will be the ultimate.

"What we've always offered at EA Sports," said Michael Pole, "is an inherent understanding of what [each] sport is all about. NASCAR is a religion. There's nothing like it. It's a lifestyle. What we want to do is to present NASCAR the way the fan sees it."

Programming advances will allow EA Sports to improve the look of NASCAR 98. The size of the field has increased to 24 cars, each with its own distinctive "skin."

"If you talk to Indy car drivers, [they] say all NASCAR guys have to do is turn left and they're fine. Well, you know what? Indy cars don't bump and run the way these guys do..."

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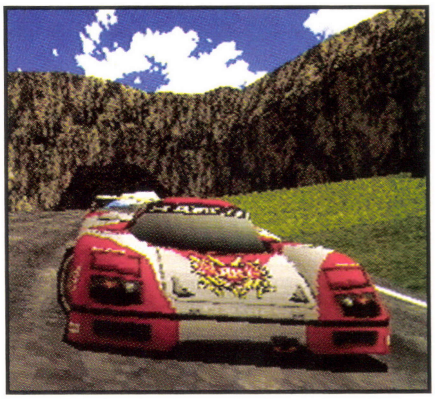
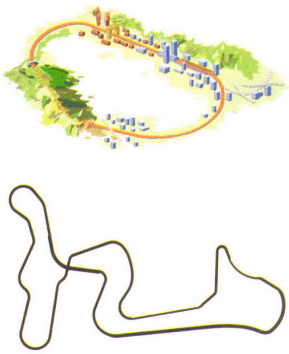


Welcome to the land of the flat-out fast. Tear up hellacious hills and rocket around hair-pin turns. 13 new Rage Racer cars stick to the tarmac like gum to the bottom of your shoe. 4 new tracks and an 11 circuit challenge will twist, fold, bend and bludgeon your central nervous system. The more rivals you humiliate,



RAGE RACER™

Real. Fast.

the more cash you accumulate. Use it to modify your existing car, or save it to finance a tricker, quicker ride. See the face on the hood of that car? His handsome mug was lacquered on with the Custom Paint & Team Logo Designer. No bolt was left untorqued in an effort to make Rage Racer the most realistic street racing experience. The only question is, how fast can you race to the store and buy it?

POWERED BY namco®

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Need For Speed II

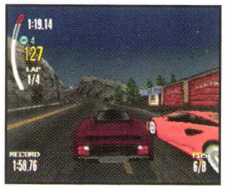
More fast cars and exotic locations than your average James Bond flick

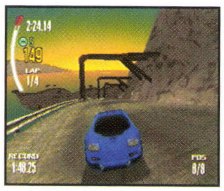
fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: EA
- developer: EA
- % complete: 90%
- difficulty: Variable
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: Spring '97

Here's a game that's perfect for any lover of exotic automobiles. Electronic Arts' Need for Speed II puts you behind the wheel of some of the most expensive production cars in the world, such as the Lotus Esprit V8, the Jaguar XJ220, the Ford GT90 and the incomparable McLaren F1, which boasts a top speed of 231 mph (and a $900,000 sticker price).

For the sequel to Need for Speed, Electronic Arts went back to the drawing board, redesigning the game from the ground up. According to EA, the game contains 50 percent more polygons yet runs at twice the speed of its popular predecessor, delivering a much greater sensation of speed.

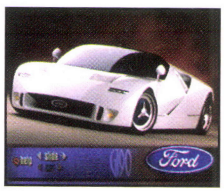




Not only is Need for Speed II a veritable catalog of the world's finest cars, but it's also a "virtual" trip around the globe; the game transports players to scenic stretches of highway in such exotic locales as Greece, Nepal, Norway and Australia. The tracks are among the largest and most detailed of any PlayStation racing title to date. You'll race across suspension bridges, beneath dense forest canopies, past temple ruins and over narrow cobblestone streets, but be careful; spend too much time admiring the scenery, and you just might wrap that expensive new toy of yours around a big piece of it!

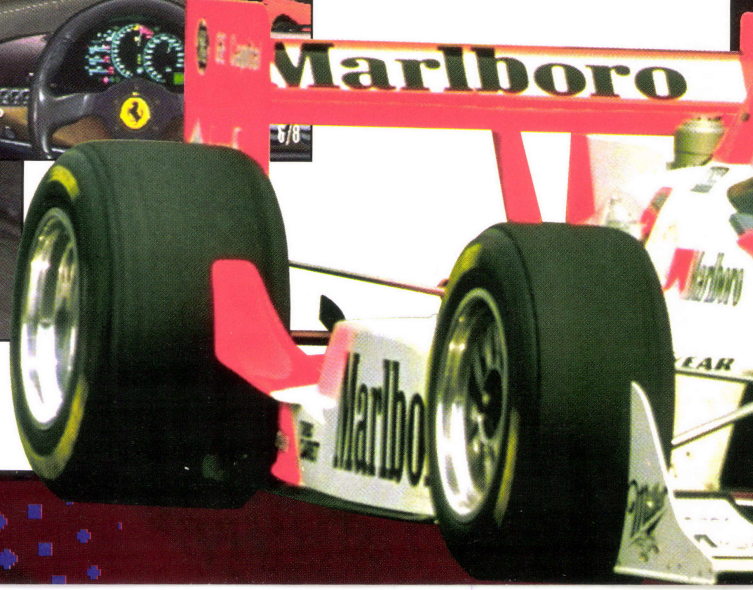
The game has two play modes—Arcade and Simulation—to satisfy player preference. Arcade Mode is faster but more forgiving in cornering and collision recovery, while Simulation Mode allows gamers to take complete control of every aspect of their vehicle, such as spoiler angle, brake bias and gear ratios. Players also have the option of competing in a single race, a standard tournament or a knockout tournament, which is described as being a sort of "musical chairs" on four wheels. At the end of each race, the last place finisher is dropped, while the others proceed to the next race.

Thanks to the vast storage capacity of CDs, Need for Speed II also contains a Showcase Mode that allows you to view videos, slides, histories and statistics of your favorite cars.



Be sure to check out your baby's vital statistics in the unique Showcase Mode.

"...spend too much time admiring the scenery, and you might wrap that new toy of yours around a big piece of it!"



Did You Know?

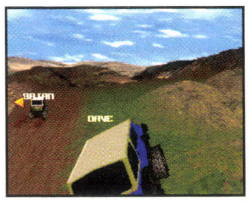
With a top speed of 231 miles per hour, the McClaren F1 is the fastest production car in the world.

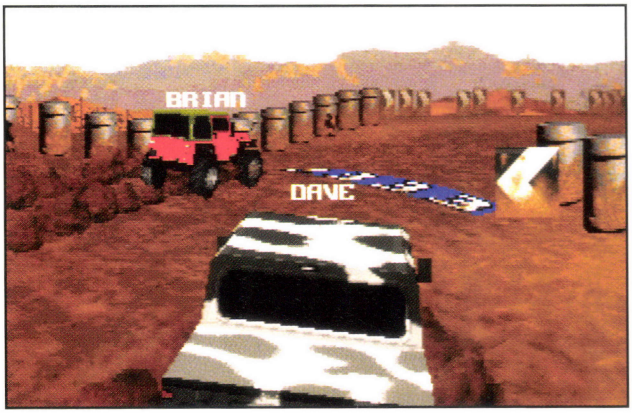
Test Drive: Off-Road

Racing

Accolade gives racers a chance to take a Test Drive—outside the lines

"Take several real-life off-road vehicles for a quick spin."



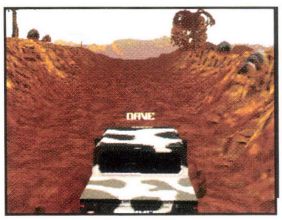


Accolade is giving gamers a chance to drive outside the lines in the newest installment in their classic Test Drive series, Test Drive: Off-Road. In keeping with the theme of the previous Test Drive games on the PC, Off-Road gives you the opportunity to take several real-life vehicles for a spin. This time around, however, instead of

a Lotus Esprit or a Porsche 911, you get to hit the road—and the dirt—with a Jeep Wrangler, a Land Rover, a Chevy pickup and even a Hummer.

Each vehicle is faithfully reproduced, from its speed and handling down to the sound of the engine and the look of the dashboard. Gamers will have the option of competing in a number of different modes, from single races all the way up to season play and full leagues.

Unlike certain other "off-road" games, Test Drive: Off-Road gives players the ability to roam freely over the countryside. There is a preset track, and racers must stick to it in order to do well, but it isn't absolutely required. This means that in this game, "off-road" really means "off-road." Apparently, the designers realized that a test drive just wouldn't be the same without the ability to run the vehicles through a series of real tests. So players can roll their vehicles, run them into trees, even drive them up the sides of buildings.



With a number of different tracks on all kinds of terrain, from snow and ice to sand and mud, Test Drive: Off-Road offers a wide variety of courses to keep the challenge level up. Each terrain has its own quirks that clever players will need to learn in order to succeed.

Did You Know?

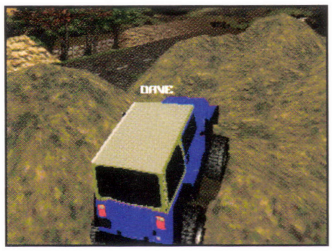
Originally developed for military use, Hummers offer on-the-fly tire deflation to traverse sandy surfaces.

The licensing of real-world off-road vehicles gives this game a realism that few other titles can match. The inclusion of a techno-inspired soundtrack by Nine Inch Nails sound-alikes Gravity Kills adds a thumping backbeat to punctuate the rocking and rolling of the vehicles. With a Two-player Mode, and the ability to link up two PlayStations for true two-person play, Test Drive: Off-Road offers a unique driving experience few other titles can match. Although the PlayStation now has a number of off-road titles, Test Drive is one that is sure to stand out from the pack.

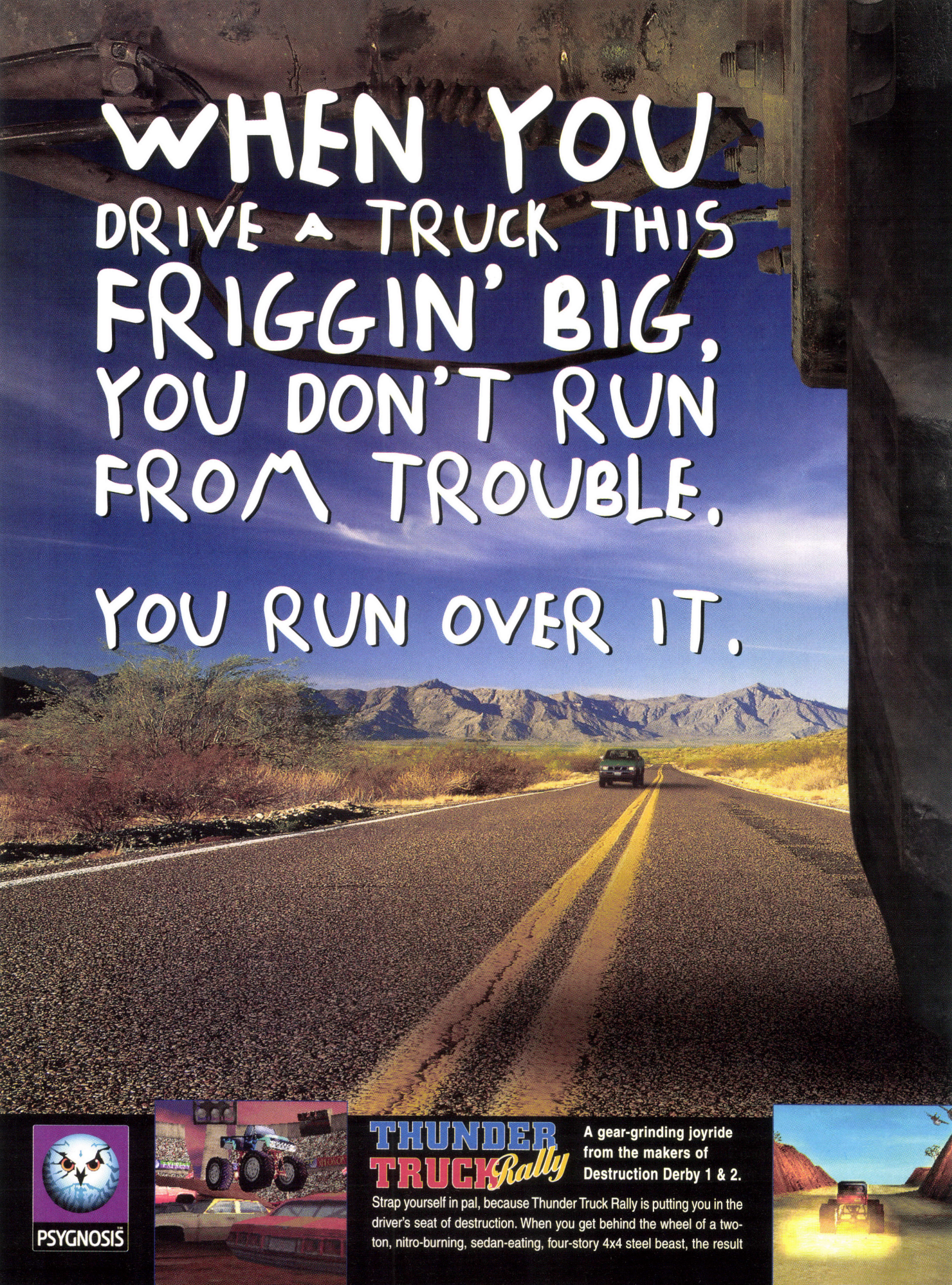
fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Accolade
- developer: Accolade
- % complete: 90%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: 2nd Qtr. '97

Various obstacles will be found scattered across the countryside for your off-roading pleasure.



Tree-studded, mountainous regions will make leaving the beaten path treacherous for intrepid drivers.



PSYGNOSIS™

THUNDER TRUCK Rally

A gear-grinding joyride from the makers of Destruction Derby 1 & 2.

Strap yourself in pal, because Thunder Truck Rally is putting you in the driver's seat of destruction. When you get behind the wheel of a two-ton, nitro-burning, sedan-eating, four-story 4x4 steel beast, the result

is high-octane excitement. Pound asphalt, dirt and the competition into submission in several monster vehicles. And with life-like 4WD suspension, 360° range of motion and killer 3D landscapes, kicking-ass will look kick-ass. Ravage roads. Trample trouble. Send family wagons to meet their maker. Get Thunder Truck Rally, and get ready to shred.

www.psygnosis.com

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Hardcore 4x4

ASC serves up some bone-jarring, mud-slinging excitement. Yeee-hah!

"Each truck is equipped with an ultrarealistic four-wheel independent suspension."

fact file

- system: PS, Saturn
- publisher: ASC Games
- developer: Gremlin, Int.
- % complete: N/A
- difficulty: Variable
- players: 1
- release date: Now

Here's one racing game that definitely lives up to its name; Hardcore 4x4 has all of the bone-jarring, mud-slinging excitement that can only be delivered by an off-road racing game.

In Hardcore, players jump behind the wheel of one of six off-road monsters, each equipped with an ultrarealistic four-wheel independent suspension, which means each vehicle jumps, corners and rolls just like real off-road racers.

ASC included six different courses, and with names like "Devil's Kitchen" and "Hades Highway," you know this ain't gonna be no Sunday drive. Further complicating things, Hardcore 4x4 has variable weather conditions, including blinding snow storms, pounding rain and hellish sand storms, which dramatically reduce visibility. Although the player is restricted to a predetermined course, there are a few shortcuts for crafty racers to utilize at various points.

From towering mountain peaks to deep gorges, Hardcore's rugged terrain will punish your truck.

As any fan of racing games knows, good graphics and sound effects are nice, but it's the control that can make or break a game. Fortunately, Hardcore 4x4 has plenty of options to allow gamers to customize the way their trucks handle. In the Options Screen, players may select either "tight" or "loose" to affect controller responsiveness. Additionally, each truck is equipped with a handbrake to allow racers to make it through those perilous hairpins. What's more, Hardcore 4x4 supports all the major analog steering controllers, offering the finest control available.

Don't let all that talk of fine control fool you, though; Hardcore 4x4 isn't a game of finesse. If you want to win, you'd better be prepared to get a little physical. One effective, not to mention fun, technique is to get on the inside of an opponent during a tight turn, then side-swipe him. This generally will cause him to roll and fall way back in the standings. Be careful, however. Your truck can receive damage, which affects its performance, particularly in Expert and Extreme Modes.

Hardcore 4x4 was programmed by the wizards at Gremlin Interactive and carries an endorsement from TNN Motor Sports.

Hardcore offers plenty of chances to catch some air, but don't wreck your suspension.

Did You Know?

The toughest Off-Road course in the world is the 7-mile course located at Line Mountain in Dornsife, Penn.

The PlayStation version of Hardcore 4x4 has some nice light-sourcing effects that simulate a variety of lighting conditions.

WITH PLAYER STRIKES, FREE AGENCY, AND CONTRACT DISPUTES, JUST HOW BRIGHT IS THE FUTURE OF SPORTS?

ACTUALLY, IT'S

Forget today's big egos and endorsements. In the future, athletes will be fighting over just one thing: this bright, glowing Plasmorb. **Introducing BallBlazer™ Champions.**

Eight champions fiercely compete for the Interstellar BallBlazer Championship.

Mega-huge arenas give you plenty of room to maneuver. And show off your winning moves.

Glide along in your Rotofoil as you battle for control of the elusive, glowing Plasmorb.

A futuristic sports game created for the Sony PlayStation that's part hockey, part racing, and part insanity. It's an action-packed, real-time 3D gaming experience like no other.

Have a ball if you can.

Players compete for the Plasmorb. Which is sort of like a ball. Except that it totally disregards the laws of gravity. You can't kick it, dunk it, or catch it. So how do you control it? Jump into

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PRETTY BRIGHT.

your hovering Rotofoil, grab onto the Plasmorb, and blaze it into your opponent's goal. **You're not alone.** Of course, your opponent is trying to do the same thing. And, that's when all the fun begins. The competition will be fierce, fast-paced, and frenetic. Whether you compete alone, in single-player mode, or in two-player mode via split-screen. But, however you play, you're in for the most action you've ever had. In this galaxy, or any other. **BallBlazer Champions.** With anti-gravity arenas, blazing thrusters, cloaking devices and nitroid injection systems, it's the way sports will be played in the future. So, you better start practicing now.

You shoot, you score! You'll taste the thrill of victory as you launch the winning goal.

Earn the title of Master Blazer, and you'll bask in the glory of piloting the Ultimate Rotofoil.

PlayStation™

KIDS TO ADULTS
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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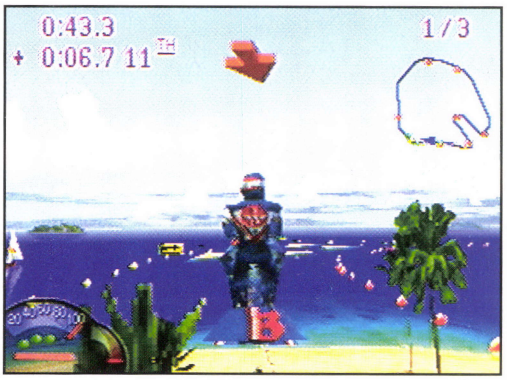
Jet Moto

Sony and SingleTrac add their own futuristic edge to the world of racing



Obstacles like palm trees here can be treacherous when you're airborne. Time your jumps.

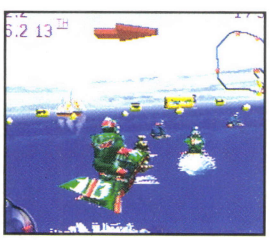
"Treacherous, insane and even suicidal levels packed with water hazards, sky jumps and cliffs."

fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Sony
- developer: SingleTrac
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Hard
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: Now

When it was first announced that Sony was releasing a game called Jet Moto, which featured racers on rocket-powered sleds careening over all sorts of terrain, many were skeptical that such a novel idea would make a quality game. But now that the game has hit store shelves, PlayStation owners everywhere have been wowed by the game's clever track design and intense racing excitement. So what makes Jet Moto so different?

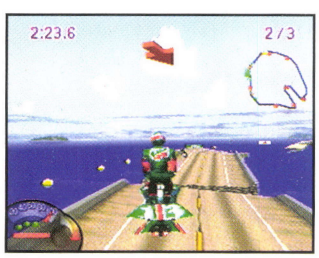
Unlike Wave Race 64, to which it is often compared, Jet Moto's racers do not use Jet Skis to compete. See, Jet Ski is a registered trademark of Kawasaki, and the company was only willing to allow one game to use its license. When Wave Race snatched up that license, the developers at SingleTrac decided that they would give the game features that no Jet Ski game could imitate. So they began to design treacherous, insane and even suicidal levels packed with water hazards, sky jumps and cliffs. They put their racers on turbo-charged rocket sleds which could travel over both water and land. And they added a few futuristic extras like magnetic "grapple" poles which could help their racers in turning. The result was Jet Moto.



One of the most innovative features of track design was the inclusion of "suicide courses," in which players must race a short track and then spin around at the end to race in the opposite direction—right into oncoming traffic. Each track also has an array of paths to choose from, less effective depending on the attributes of the bike and rider you've selected. For example, a quicker, lighter bike must avoid waves on the water, which will slow it down considerably, but a heavier bike can plow right through them with a negligible loss in speed.

Racing fans have come to appreciate Jet Moto as one of the best titles in the PlayStation library.

Real-world licenses give Jet Moto a taste of realism.



Did You Know?

Powered water craft racing is a fast-growing sport. Fifty to 100 racers start all at once during a competition.

BLOW DOORS OR BLOW CHOW!

FEATURES:

- 25+ cars to choose from
- Race in either direction on 5 different tracks
- Includes original Pikes Peak Hill Climb
- 12 different camera angles
- Build and design your own tracks using the first-of-it's-kind track editor
- Design your own car, tires, suspension, color and more!
- 1 or 2 player action

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Rage Racer

Namco's newest racer offers souped-up graphics and tons of options

fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Namco
- developer: Namco
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1
- release date: May '97

Racers, start your engines. It's time for Rage Racer, the newest installment in Namco's racing series that began with Ridge Racer. These ultrarealistic games were the first racing titles to use lifelike graphics in believable environments, and were all the rage at arcades and on the Sony PlayStation. Now the series is back, with improved graphics and some other enhancements designed to offer a completely unique racing experience.

"Gritty, more realistic graphics put Rage Racer in a class completely by itself."

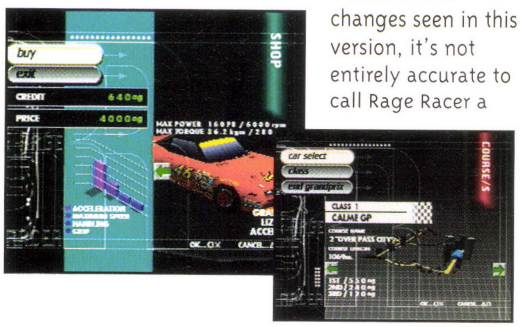
With all the changes seen in this version, it's not entirely accurate to call Rage Racer a sequel, although the games do share some similarities. The biggest change from the previous titles is the use of money to upgrade your vehicle. Instead of awarding hidden cars or tracks for first-place finishes, Rage Racer rewards racers who place in first, second or third with credits to apply toward new vehicles or tune-ups of the present car. These prizes increase in size as the player advances through the various classes of competition.

The competition itself is structured differently than in the previous games. The first class features three separate courses on one shared track. When the player places among the top three on each of the courses, he is allowed to advance to the next class, where the competition is quicker and smarter than before. In order to succeed and advance through the classes, the player must either buy a new car or upgrade the present car. The player must decide what exactly is needed to succeed in the upcoming race. Tracks with a number of hairpin turns require a car with good handling and quick acceleration, while those with more straightaways are best approached with a great deal of speed.

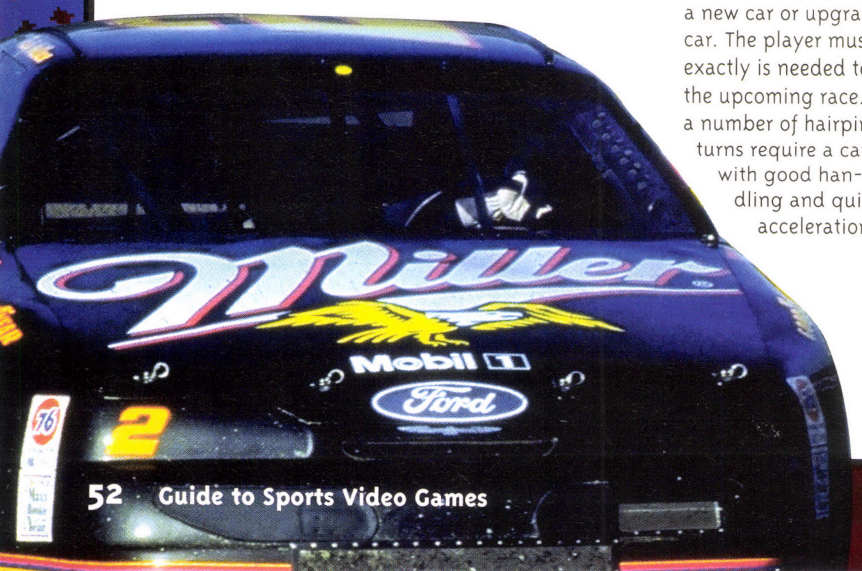
Gritty, more realistic graphics put Rage Racer in a class completely by itself. The cars, the scenery, even the time-of-day lighting effects are all greatly improved.

With all the new features in the game, Rage Racer is sure to be one of the greatest racers yet. It's already turned plenty of heads in Japan. Expect nothing less from the stateside release.

Enemies get smarter as the player advances and begin to drive a bit more aggressively.



Wits and quick reflexes will keep you in the running.

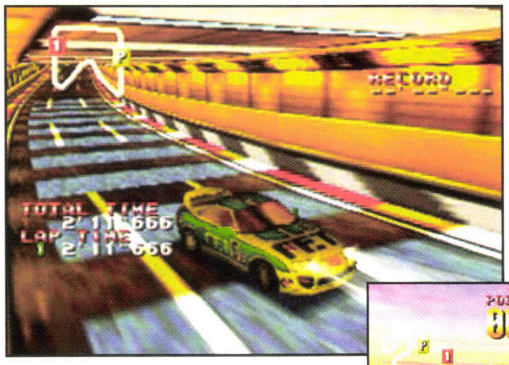


Did You Know?

Rage Racer includes 10 completely different cars that can be purchased and upgraded for performance.

Rev Limit

Rev Limit will bring some serious racing action to the Nintendo 64



With over 10 cars and at least three different modes of play, Rev Limit stands to offer great replay value for N64 fans.

fact file

- system: Nintendo 64
- publisher: Seta
- developer: Seta
- % complete: N/A
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: N/A

Did You Know?

The average Formula 1 team's budget for the 1997 season is between $25 and $45 million.

One of the most anticipated Nintendo 64 titles in Japan is Seta's hot-looking new racing game, Rev Limit. Planned for a June release overseas, Rev Limit is shaping up to be the hottest racer this summer, if not all year. According to Seta, Rev Limit's car physics will be the most realistic of any racer ever, thanks to the Nintendo 64's powerful processing abilities. The performance of each car will be calculated on road friction, air resistance and crash damage, creating an almost lifelike driving experience.

For a 64-Meg cartridge, Rev Limit offers an amazingly vast amount of gameplay styles and options. There are over 10 cars to choose from, and three different types of races: sprint races (basic, 3-10 laps), endurance races (long-term, 20-50 laps) and drag races (quick 400 or 1,000 meter sprints). Players can even choose to manage their own racing team by hiring drivers, giving them instructions and then having them run their race. While it might not be exciting to some, it certainly adds a nice touch of simulation to this otherwise hardcore arcade-style racer. Additionally, similar to Namco's Rage Racer, players can earn money by winning races to tune up and enhance their cars or to buy better parts, etc. Very cool.

Right now there are no official plans for a U.S. release of Rev Limit, but with any luck, someone smart will pick it up and have it over here in time for a Christmas release.

Thanks to the Nintendo 64's powerful CPU, Rev Limit's graphics are some of the most realistic-looking of any home racer ever.

"Rev Limit offers an amazingly vast amount of gameplay styles and options to choose from."

Rally Cross

Sony answers back loudly with its own rally racing powerhouse

"Rather than an all-out speed-fest, Rally Cross requires players to master all aspects of Rally racing..."

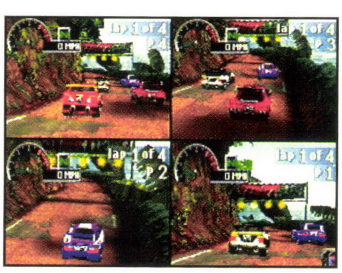
fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Sony
- developer: Sony
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Hard
- players: 1-4
- release date: March '97

If Sony hadn't come up with their own Rally Cross sim to go up against Sega's famed rally game, PlayStation fans would be screaming bloody murder by now. Happily, Sony felt the pinch and responded with this year's premier off-road racer: Rally Cross.

Looking like no other racing sim before it, Rally Cross offers several non-traditional cars (some that look more like a VW Bug than the traditional, high-powered four-wheel-drive hatchback) ready to race in three racing classes: Rookie, Veteran and Pro. Within each category there are up to four tracks in various settings including an island track, a sand track called Oasis, a snowy ice-covered track and every Nebraskan's favorite – an indoor arena track. Sony made sure the driving experience would be intense so authentic four-wheel independent suspension, manual or automatic transmission and three views were included.

The object is to win each category in overall points in order to move on to the next ranking—be it Veteran or Pro. Once the player has advanced, a whole new set of tracks and vehicles await. Actually racing the tracks will take all the driver's skills and abilities. Much of the terrain is laden with bumps, jumps and blind corners not to mention giant mud holes. Rather than an all-out speedfest, Rally Cross requires players to master all aspects of rally racing: cornering, jockeying for position in traffic, shifting at the right time and how to keep the cars upright at all times.



It's the little things that make a difference, like kicking up mud on the Lost Mines track as you fight for the lead.

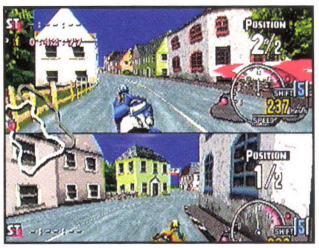
Manx TT

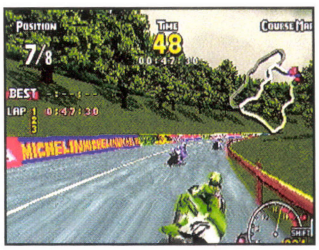
Sega adds another great racing sim to its rich line of road-burnin' heavyweights

fact file

- system: Saturn
- publisher: Sega
- developer: AM3
- % complete: 95%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: May '97

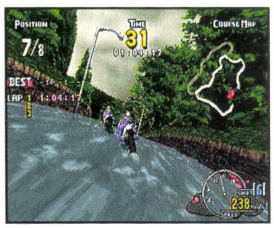
Manx TT is leading the motorcycle sim pack with several other "hopefuls" nipping on its heels, including VMX from Virgin and Moto Racer GP from BMG. The only difference is that Manx TT is a true arcade port-over sporting all the features of its arcade big brother except for the stylish fiberglass motorcycle.

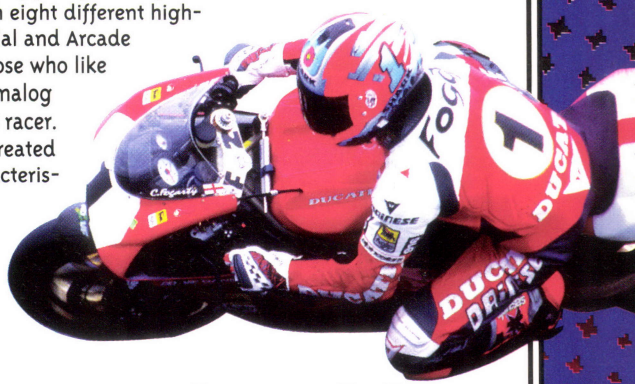




Two primary tracks that can be raced—backward and mirrored—feature long gradual curves and lots of pretty scenery to look at. Player modes include: the new Saturn Mode, in which eight different high-powered superbikes can be used, and the traditional Time Trial and Arcade Modes. In Time Trial, a Ghosting Mode is also included for those who like to race against their best time. As an added bonus, the 3-D analog controller can be used to smooth out the turns for the serious racer.

This game is brought to us by AM3, the same fellows who created Sega Rally, and is quite similar in gameplay characteristics and overall appearance to that hit game. Preliminary play testing revealed Manx TT is quite fast and works exceptionally well with the analog controller. It is also likely that the game will have a hidden bonus track just as Rally had. For those who thrive on multiplayer fun, Manx offers a Two-player Head-to-Head Mode as well.



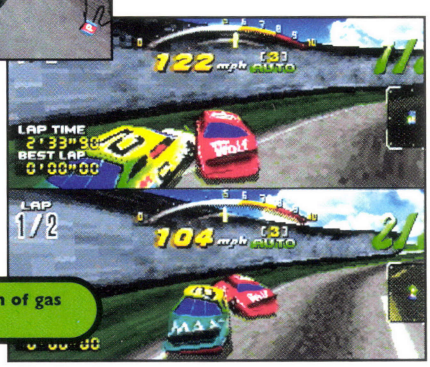


Daytona Championship Circuit Edition

Arcade racing at its best just got a little bit bigger and better

It was a long wait but the sequel to arguably the best arcade racing sim ever, Daytona, has finally arrived.

Daytona Championship Circuit Edition takes all the elements that made the first edition so tasty and has added two new tracks and several new cars to the mix, not to mention two-player capability. True Daytona junkies will notice a few things that may not be to their liking, such as modified gameplay (from the original) and noticeable slowdown in some areas of the game, particularly in Two-player Mode. Whereas in the original Daytona players could take some corners at full speed, in Daytona: CCE, they must slow down and take a responsible line through the curves. Yet, to the contrary, it is now harder to wreck the car. On the upside, the annoying singing soundtrack is gone and has been replaced with a rockin' mix. Faults aside, Daytona: CCE holds up well.



fact file

- system: Saturn
- publisher: Sega
- developer: AM3
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Hard
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: Now

Perhaps the most anticipated and essential addition to the sequel is the Two-player Mode.

Did You Know?

The average stock car consumes a gallon of gas every four miles in an all-out run.

Wave Race 64

Nintendo's aquatic racer makes waves among racing games

"Anyone who has ever wanted to go jet skiing, but never has, this is as close to the real thing as you can get."

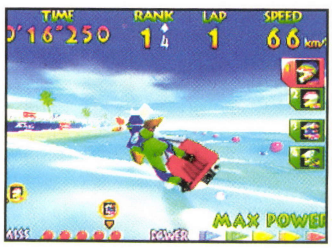
fact file

- system: Nintendo 64
- publisher: Nintendo
- developer: Nintendo
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1 or 2
- release date: Now

Shigeru Miyamoto is well-known in the gaming world for producing some of the best games ever known to man. His first racing title for the Nintendo 64, Wave Race 64, is no different. Anyone who's ever wanted to go Jet Skiing but never has, this is as close to the real thing as you're gonna get. The physics are so realistic it's scary, and the same can be said for the wave movement, which is entirely lifelike in appearance and motion.

Wave Race 64 has four distinct modes of play: Championship, Time Attack, Score Attack and Vs. Mode, and each provide a unique gameplay experience. The Championship Mode is obviously the main mode of play, with over seven tracks and varying difficulty levels. In order to open up the final two tracks, you need to win the game on both Normal and Hard Modes (leaving every track open for Expert Mode). Time Attack is your run-of-the-mill Time Trial race, but Score Attack is something entirely new. In the Score Attack Mode, you get points for doing stunts with your Jet Ski, like handlebar handstands and 360-degree jumps. High scores are saved to the game's memory or to an external Controller Pak so you can take them to a friend's to compete. Finally, there's Vs. Mode, which is a two-player split screen race that runs surprisingly smooth.

Obviously there are a wide variety of gameplay options in Wave Race 64, which is especially appealing considering the small size of the game (most CD-ROM games these days don't provide half of what Wave Race does on a miniscule cartridge). Add to that the amazing graphical capabilities of the Nintendo 64 system and what you end up with is a top-notch game that no serious racing fan should be without. With games like this, one can only dream of what F-Zero 64, Miyamoto's next N64 racer, is going to play like...



Although there is no four-player option in WR64, there is a nice Two-player Split-screen Mode that runs quite smoothly.

Did You Know?

The original Wave Race was released by Nintendo for the portable Game Boy system back in 1992.

Destruction Derby 2

Racing

The next best thing to having a roller coaster in your living room

Psygnosis' ground-breaking game of vehicular mayhem is back! Destruction Derby 2 has arrived, and it's packed with all the excitement of the original plus a whole lot more.

The first Destruction Derby wowed gamers with its amazing 3-D graphics and realistic crash physics. DD's cars collided, spun and belched forth black smoke, impressive effects that hadn't been seen in a console game until that point.

Psygnosis wanted the cars in the first Destruction Derby to occasionally roll on impact but ran out of time to work the necessary crash calculations into the first game. Having more time to tinker with the follow-up, Psygnosis was able to include rolls, flips and more. Hoods and other recognizable parts also now fly from vehicles, instead of just little triangles.

In addition to the graphical enhancements, Psygnosis also wanted to pump up the racing action in Destruction Derby 2. Tracks were made wider to increase maneuverability and to reduce the number of bottlenecks that occurred, which slowed down the action in the first game. Some truly wicked jumps, which cause cars to corkscrew out of control if not hit at the proper angle, also were added.

Psygnosis included some hidden Destruction Derby tracks in DD2, some of which contain perilous cliffs or other hazards that completely disable your car.

Fortunately for fans of the original, Psygnosis did not change the modes of play available. Gamers still may compete in a stock car race, in which the goal is to make it to the finish line first; a wreckin' race, in which the goal is to score points by causing opponents to spin out, or a destruction derby, in which the goal is to inflict the maximum amount of damage while remaining alive as long as possible.

If you favor action and mayhem over strategy and finesse in a racing game, DD2 is the game for you.

fact file

system
PlayStation

publisher
Psygnosis

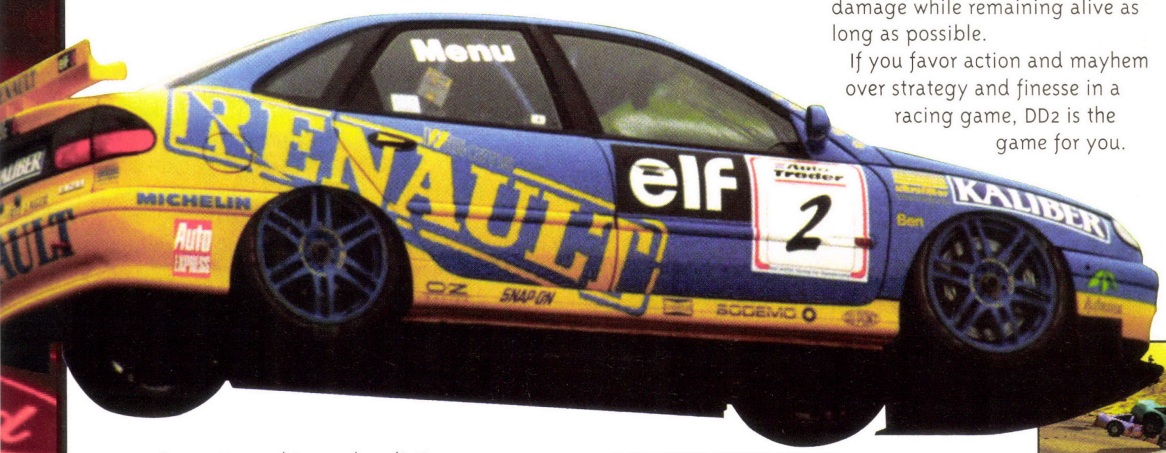
developer
Reflections

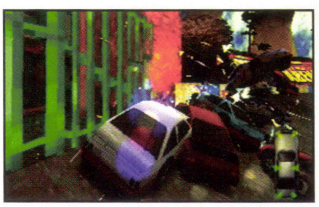
% complete
100%

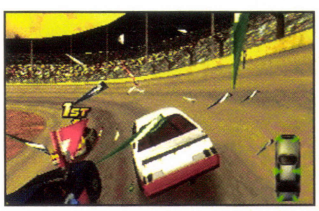
difficulty
Hard

players
1 or 2

release date
Now







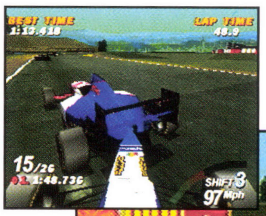
Did You Know?

Nascar driver Jeff Gordon came out ahead with 2,314 laps and 2,386 miles in 1996 and won $2,484,518 total.

Psygnosis had more time to work on the crash physics for Destruction Derby 2. Cars now flip, tumble and corkscrew out of control upon impact.

Formula 1

Once again Psygnosis redefines the "formula" for racing games



Think you're good enough to beat Michael Schumacher's lap record at Monaco? Psygnosis' Formula 1 gives you the chance to find out.

You'll have to endure F1's variable weather conditions to win.

fact file

system
PlayStation

publisher
Psygnosis

developer
Bizarre Creations

% complete
100%

difficulty
Variables

players
1 or 2

release date
Now

With the possible exception of Andretti Racing, Psygnosis' Formula 1 generally is regarded as the most realistic racing game available for any console system. Officially licensed by the Formula 1 Association, the game features 35 actual drivers from 13 Grand Prix teams and 17 tracks from around the globe, allowing gamers to simulate an entire F1 season.

With previous credits such as WipeOut and Destruction Derby, Psygnosis already had strong racing credentials. Nevertheless, they enlisted the aid of an actual Grand Prix team to ensure their game would be as accurate as possible. Detailed physics models were created, including such calculations as downforce, to insure F1's cars would not only look but also handle just like the real thing.

Psygnosis enlisted the aid of a real Grand Prix team for the making of F1.

Psygnosis labored equally hard to insure F1's tracks are as detailed as the cars. Composed of 60,000 to 90,000 "polys," each track contains every twist and turn found in their real-world counterparts, from Monaco's tunnel to Silverstone's Hanger Straight.

F1 contains two different racing modes, so gamers of any level of experience can enjoy the thrill of Formula 1 racing. In Arcade Mode, the cars are far more forgiving, particularly when turning, and pit stops are not necessary. In Grand Prix Mode, the cars behave much more like the real thing, and visiting the pits becomes essential, whether it's to refuel or to repair damage received out on the track.

"F1's computer opponents employ 'on-the-fly realtime decision making' to survey track conditions."

According to Psygnosis, F1's computer opponents take artificial intelligence to the next level by employing "on-the-fly realtime decision making" to survey track conditions and by using such techniques as slipstreaming to dog you at every turn.

F1 pushes the audio capabilities of the PlayStation to the limits, too. Engine sounds were sampled from real Formula 1 cars and guitar greats Joe Satriani and Steve Vai were enlisted to provide F1's high-octane soundtrack. If that weren't enough, Psygnosis brought in world-renowned racing announcer Murray Walker to provide the commentary.

Anyone looking for a realistic racing title that is also a blast to play definitely should take Psygnosis' Formula 1 for a spin.

Did You Know?

Downforce is the physical force that presses down on Formula 1 cars, helping to keep them on the track.

Mario Kart

Racing

One of Nintendo's most popular racing games is back on the streets

Super Mario Kart is back! The classic Super Nes go-kart racer has finally spawned a sequel, with enhanced graphics, more tracks, tighter gameplay and best of all—four-player capability.

For anyone who's never played Mario Kart, the object of the game is like any other racing game: win. However, in Mario Kart, there's a twist. Scattered throughout the tracks are colored cubes that contain a variety of special weapons and power-ups to aid you during play. They range from Koopa shells that can knock out opposing racers to Magic Mushrooms that provide turbo boosts for your kart. This adds a great deal of excitement to an otherwise average game, and when played in Battle Mode—with up to three other racers—the fun factor simply goes through the roof.

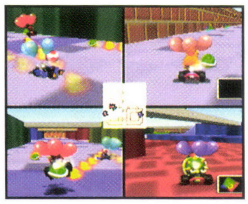
"When played in Battle Mode—with up to three other racers—the fun factor simply goes through the roof."

Mario Kart 64 has 16 tracks played over four circuits, each of which can be played in 50cc Mode (novice), 100cc Mode (medium) or 150cc Mode (pro). Then there are an additional four tracks made exclusively for Battle Mode, as well as time trials and practice modes. Obviously quite a package.

Anyone with a Nintendo 64 needs to check out Mario Kart 64. It could arguably be the best multiplayer game *ever*.

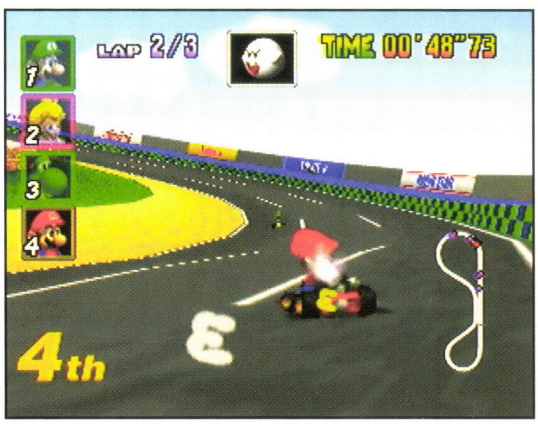
With over 16 regular tracks and four Battle Mode tracks, Mario Kart 64 provides more than enough variety for old-school Kart freaks.

The highlight of Mario Kart 64's gameplay is easily the Battle Mode, where one to four players can go at it in one of four special arenas.



fact file

- system: Nintendo 64
- publisher: Nintendo
- developer: Nintendo
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1-4
- release date: Now



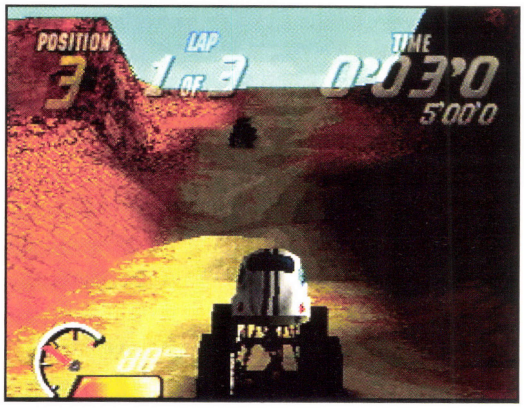
Did You Know?

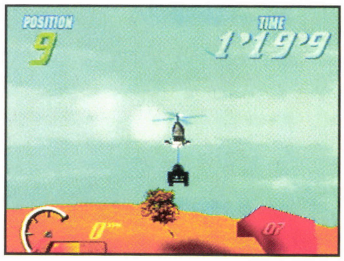
In Japan, Toad's name is Kinopio. The Japanese word for mushroom is "Kinoko." See the resemblance?!

Racing

Thunder Truck Rally

The fastest monster VWs on Earth battle to be the king of the 4x4s





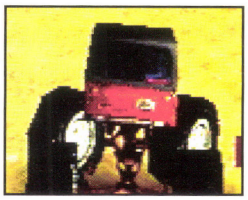
"Car Crushing is a competition in which two trucks destroy as many cars as possible in the allotted time."

fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Psygnosis
- developer: Psygnosis
- % complete: 95%
- difficulty: Easy
- players: 1
- release date: April '97

Up until now 32-Bit 4x4 driving sims have been a little less than "speedy." In fact, many of the recent releases in this genre have been mighty high in realism yet quite low in frame rate, not to mention racing excitement. To the contrary, Thunder Truck Rally bursts out of the gate as probably the fastest 4x4 sim yet. And why not? It's only natural that the guys at Reflections who created Destruction Derby 2 would utilize that same tried-and-true engine and use it in Thunder Truck to ensure the game would move along at a fast pace.

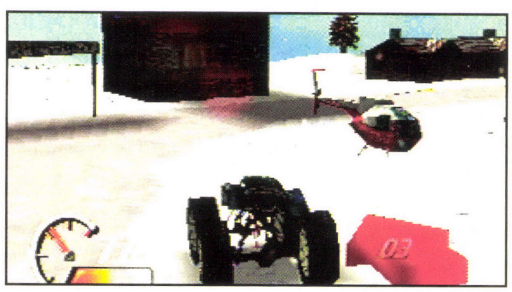
In the sim, the wild 4x4s are ranked by handling, top speed and power ratings. Each vehicle is represented by its own wacky character with appropriate names like Miyuki and Nail. Once in the action, players can race either in Circuit or Endurance racing. Both options take players to exotic tracks and locales sporting such obstacles (to name a few) as molten lava fields and monstrous hills and valleys in others. The third play option, Car Crushing, is a competition in which two trucks destroy as many cars as possible in the allotted time. Whatever the mode, Thunder Truck Rally delivers a fast, 3-D driving experience over vast desert-like environments with some of the coolest-looking 4x4 vehicles to hit an off-road racing game yet.

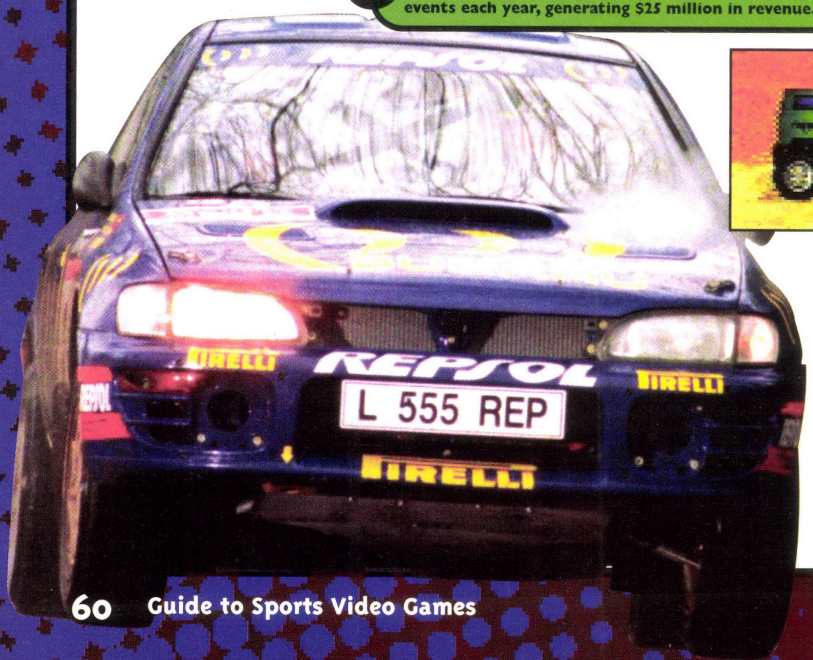


Did You Know?

Ten to 15 million spectators turn out to watch off-road events each year, generating $25 million in revenue.

When hopelessly lost, players may use the emergency helicopter call in which a copter magically appears and airlifts the lost lamb back to the course.





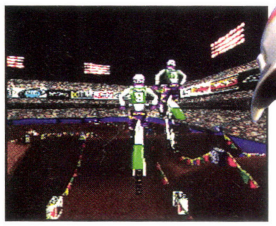
VMX Racing

Playmates Interactive brings intense motocross action to the PlayStation

"Get ready to eat some dirt and make some tracks."

Playmates Interactive Entertainment is bringing motocross action to the Sony PlayStation with the release of Studio E's VMX Racing. Packed with challenging tracks full of treacherous jumps and hairpin turns, VMX has all the high-speed excitement of real motocross racing without any of the danger of serious bodily injury.

Players get their choice of type and size of dirtbike, from the smaller, quicker vehicles to the larger, more powerful bikes. Races are conducted on a number of different terrains, from the climate-controlled comfort of indoor stadiums to mud-laden tracks in the Pacific Northwest. Bumps and hills abound to keep things interesting.



Take care with your jumps; mid-air collisions can do serious damage to both your bike and your body.

Players also have an arsenal of tricks which can be performed while going over particularly large jumps. These range from simple "table-top" jumps to more complex maneuvers. You'll earn recognition from the course announcer as well as from your adoring fans.

VMX's courses range from challenging to extremely challenging, with quick turns and treacherous drops that will send your rider sprawling if you're not careful. This is not a game where you open the throttle and go for broke; you'll need to take each turn with precision and care.

With a full Circuit Mode as well as single races, the game offers plenty of challenge for even the most experienced racers, and the relative scarcity of motocross games for any system offers a novelty all its own. A number of novel options offer added enjoyment, as well.

With its intense speed and wide range of options, VMX Racing will appeal to fans of white-knuckle racing games. So get ready to eat some dirt, because this game will be hitting store shelves soon.

Hairpin turns and death-defying drops will help make your life more interesting.

fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Playmates
- developer: Studio E
- % complete: 80%
- difficulty: Hard
- players: 1
- release date: 2nd Qtr. '97

Did You Know?

If you pull off enough tricks in VMX Racing, you may be rewarded with a chance to race on the moon.

DARE2COMPARE racing

WE TELL YOU WHICH RACING GAMES ARE BEST!

Photos © ALLSPORT USA 1997

THE STARTING LINEUP

DARE2COMPARE racing

The latest crop of racing games has been both diverse and outstanding. From the impeccable Sega Rally to Namco's Rage Racer, Nintendo's beautiful Wave Race and Sony's innovative Rally Cross, there's literally something for everyone who wants to grip a virtual steering wheel. There have been some disappointments—at the top of the list was Sega's Daytona: CCE and Destruction Derby 2 which broke more things than they fixed. Regardless, 3-D racing games seem to fit snugly into this generation of hardware, and it'll be exciting to see what the next wave of titles will bring.

Spin Control

One of the most important things to remember while going in and out of corners is to keep the gas on at all times while simultaneously tapping the brake just enough to keep the traction throughout the corner.

Rage Racer

Should have had a Two-player Mode

"Very Good"

Rage Racer

PlayStation

Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: A worthy sequel to Ridge Racer, Rage Racer is one of the best PlayStation racing games.

STRENGTHS: This is a beautiful racing game from start to finish. The gameplay is similar to Ridge Racer, but is now more in-depth thanks to additional tracks and options.

WEAKNESSES: The only glaring weakness is the absence of a Two-player Mode. A racing game, no matter how good it is, should have a Two-player Mode, period—end of story.

WHAT'S NEW: There's more tracks and a host of new cars you can buy as you go through the different classes. The graphics are also phenomenally improved over Ridge Racer.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The vehicle editor is something cool to fiddle with. You can change your car's colors and its hood design. Nothing is better than writing expletives on your car hood—it intimidates the other drivers.

Need for Speed 2

Better than the first in some ways

"Solid"

Need for Speed 2

PlayStation

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Electronic Arts
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: The sequel to EA's dream car exposition is better in some ways, but worse in others. If you were a fan of the first game, then you'll probably like this one for its good merits.

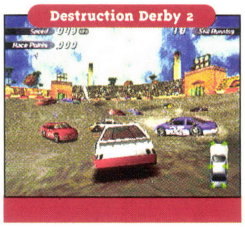
STRENGTHS: There isn't any racing game quite like this. Where else can you take real cars worth millions of dollars and race them at 200 mph down a street bristling with traffic? There are also plenty of racing modes and courses to enjoy. Best of all, you can replay your entire race from start to finish so you can see all of the traffic wrecks and mayhem you caused.

WEAKNESSES: The graphics aren't quite as good as maybe they should have been for a realistic racing game such as this. Some of the cars look downright cartoony. While this may be fine for the likes of Bugs Bunny, it won't fare well

Andretti Racing '96

Manx TT Superbike

Destruction Derby 2



Formula One

Sega Rally

editors' choice
Wave Race 64

The most complete package

"Awesome"

Wave Race 64
Nintendo 64
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Nintendo
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: Nintendo's first racing game is an incredible mix of gameplay, innovation and beauty.

STRENGTHS: Like so many of Miyamoto's games, this Jet Ski racer is stuffed heartily with gameplay. Sure, the graphics are stunning (in particular the waves), but Wave Race is an action-packed title which leaves many other racing games merely treading water.

WEAKNESSES: Like so many Nintendo 64 games, the glaring weakness is the unimpressive music. A title like this really needs a killer soundtrack, not the *Sesame Street*-esque tunes that "grace" it. A few extra courses would have gone a long way since this game is a little too easy for experienced players.

WHAT'S NEW: What isn't? This title brings a lot of new, innovative things to the table. The aesthetic quality of the water is better than any arcade machine thus far.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The stunts you can do during races are pretty incredible. Oh, and did I mention the waves?

with serious driving types.

WHAT'S NEW: Well look at all dem new, shiny sports cars.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The choices of real vehicles at your disposal is amazingly diverse. From supercars like the Ferrari F-50 to incredible "concept" cars such as the Ford GT90, Need for Speed 2 has a lineup of vehicles that any grease monkey would give his spleen to drive.

Brings new elements to racing

"Very Good"

Rally Cross
PlayStation
Publisher: Sony
Developer: Sony
Difficulty: Hard

IN A NUTSHELL: One of the most unique racing games to hit a 32-Bit platform in some time, Sony's Rally Cross is a good game that isn't for everyone.

STRENGTHS: Unique gameplay, first and foremost. This off-road game is one of the most rugged of its genre because the cars can flip over if the driver isn't careful. If you're used to the carefree gameplay of games such as Rage Racer or Sega Rally, it might take awhile to become acclimated to this game. Lots of different tracks, cars and bonuses make this a game that can last for a long, long time.

WEAKNESSES: The camera view often makes it difficult to see clearly in some opportune times. Also, the Three- and Four-player Simultaneous Modes move very sluggishly, although they are playable.

WHAT'S NEW: This is Sony's first attempt at a real racing title.

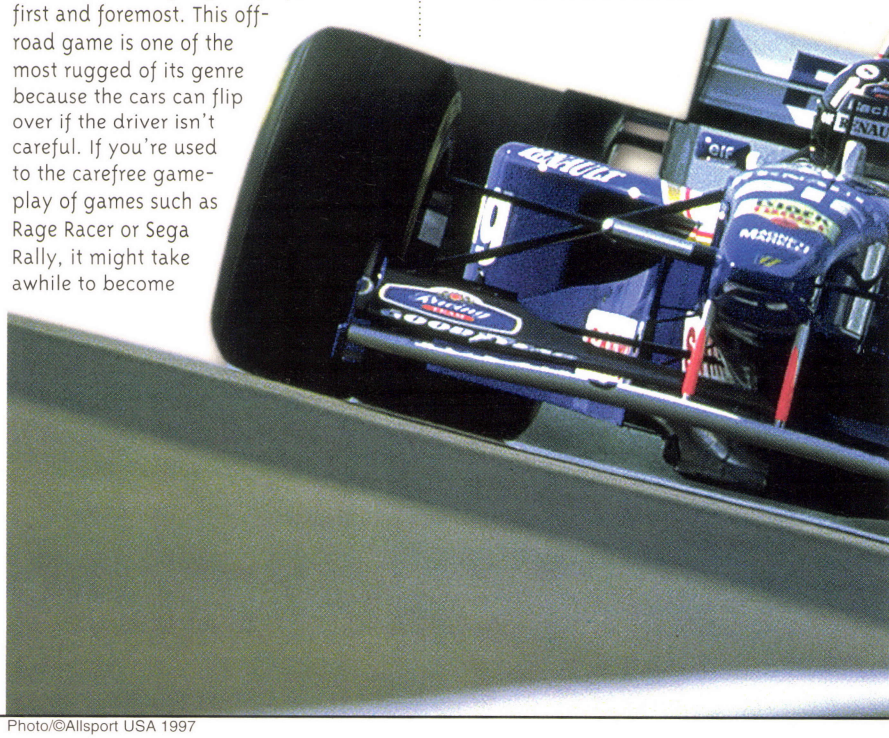
WHAT'S UNIQUE: The gameplay in general is one-of-a-kind, and that's a good thing in this case. In this world of cookie-cutter racing games, it's refreshing to see something new.

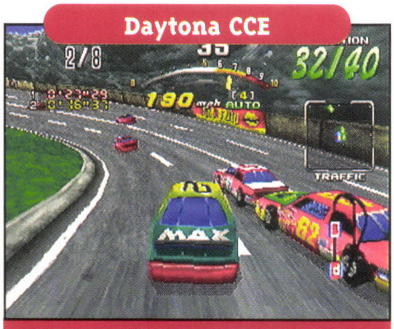
"Weak"

Daytona CCE
Saturn
Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: One of the most obvious rush-jobs of the year. If you can deal with playing a 70 percent complete "release" of the much more polished Japanese version, then this is for you.

STRENGTHS: Daytona CCE's only major strength (if you want to call it that) is the new Two-Player Mode. Sorely missed from the original Saturn Daytona, Sega decided to add a Split-screen Head-to-head Mode in DCCE. Despite being of poor graphical quality (the frame rate chokes in 2P Mode and the


Photo/©Allsport USA 1997



Daytona CCE

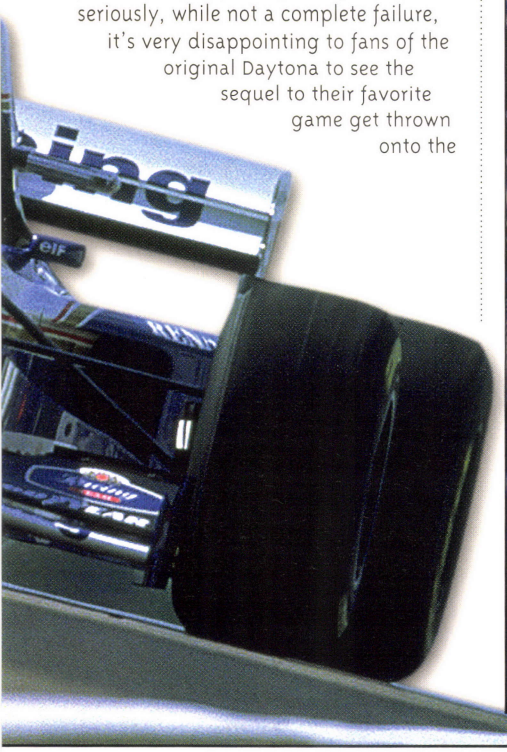
Daytona's unworthy sequel

pop-up will make you chronically ill), it is somewhat fun to play. No, really.

WEAKNESSES: Whew, where do we start? For one, it's atrocious that a company would release an "upgrade" to a fabulous game and damage the name by rushing it to market without half of the features that made it an upgrade in the first place. The Japanese version (released three months AFTER the U.S. version) includes two soundtracks (original and remixed), much better play control, modem and link cable support (yes, Japan has a link cable) and cleaned-up graphics. At least importing isn't as expensive as it used to be.

WHAT'S NEW: A completely remixed soundtrack, two new rather uninspiring tracks and a Two-Player Mode.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: If you've ever wanted to see what it's like to play betas like us pros, well, just pick up this game! But seriously, while not a complete failure, it's very disappointing to fans of the original Daytona to see the sequel to their favorite game get thrown onto the market early just to make a few extra bucks before Christmas. "Steer" clear.



"Very Good"

Andretti Racing 96

PlayStation

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Developer: EA Sports

Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: In the short time hardcore 32-Bit racing sims have been around, Andretti Racing has persevered with outstanding gameplay, graphics and depth.

STRENGTHS: Providing just enough sim with the proper amount of arcade-like qualities to satisfy fans of each. The extensive amount of depth in the game is evident by the number of quality tracks (12 in all) for both the Indy and Stock Car circuits. Car control is very responsive in both Indy and Stock Car not to mention having separate physics and driving characteristics in each.

WEAKNESSES: While progressing through a season it is a given that one of the three Andrettis, if not all, will win the race in order. It's more of an

Andretti Racing 96

Unprecedented racing realism

PHOTO/ BILL HALL/ALLSPORT USA ©1997

How The Features Stack Up

▼ GAMES FEATURES ▶	Number of Courses	Number of Vehicles	Real Vehicles	League Play	Number of Players	Vehicle Customization
Rage Racer	3	Many	No	Yes	1	Yes
Need for Speed 2	6	8	Yes	No	1-2	Yes
Wave Race 64	9	4	Yes	Yes	1-2	Yes
Rally Cross	Many	Many	No	Yes	1-4	No
Daytona CCE	5	8	Yes	No	1-2	Yes
Andretti Racing 96	17	2	Yes	Yes	1-2	Yes
Manx TT Super Bike	4	8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Destruction Derby 2	7	3	No	Yes	1	No
Formula One	17	13	Yes	Yes	1-2	Yes
Sega Rally	3	2	Yes	No	1-2	Yes

annoyance than a weakness but just the same, you can count on a pesky Andretti always zeroing in on your tail in the Indy Car Mode.

WHAT'S NEW: Andretti is the first true 32-Bit racing sim to tap the power of the PlayStation and the Saturn to create a believably realistic racing experience.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The most unique aspect of the game is the inclusion of Stock Car racing in a game sponsored by a famous Indy racing family. Even so, the Stock Car racing holds up just as well as the Indy racing portion.

"Solid"

Manx TT Super Bike

Sega

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Psygnosis/Perfect/Tantalus
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: A direct port of Sega's premier motorbike racing game. A near-perfect arcade conversion, but the game's depth is a little thin when compared to other home racers.

STRENGTHS: Manx TT thrives on gameplay. With the analog pad, control is silky smooth and the graphics and frame rate are top-notch. The all-new Saturn Mode includes two new tracks (sort of...they're actually just the originals but reversed and mirrored) and a host of new bikes to choose from. Then you've got the Split-screen Two-Player Mode (a must nowadays) and a nice Ghost Mode that allows you to try to beat your best time against a duplicate of yourself from the last time you ran the particular track. Finally, there's a minimal amount of pop-up compared to past Sega racers like Daytona USA, which is definitely a good thing.

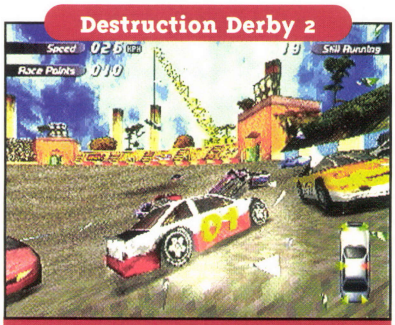
WEAKNESSES: The lack of tracks severely hurts this otherwise very promising title. If there were more to do (perhaps some all-new tracks instead of just rearranged versions of the originals), it might be worth the price, but as it stands, this is rental material. Keep in mind however, that this review is of the Japanese version, and there's always hope for a better U.S. release (but don't count on it).

WHAT'S NEW: New tracks, new bikes, new modes and best of all—sheep! Yes, there is actually a way for you to ride on a sheep. It's not that cloned one, either. Check out our Racing Tricks section for the scoop on how to get the sheep.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: There aren't many motorbike racers out there, period. Manx, while somewhat shallow in depth, is still the best one of them, by far.

Manx TT Super Bike

The best motorcycle game?



Destruction Derby 2

Looks nice, but doesn't play well

"Weak"

Destruction Derby 2

PlayStation

Publisher: Sony
Developer: Psygnosis
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: Psygnosis made a beautiful game, but unfortunately, like the first one, it isn't very fun to play.

STRENGTHS: Technically, Destruction Derby excels. The driving engine is much more complex than the first, and a dazzling array of effects are used to energize the action. Several game modes are included, such as the famed Destruction Derby that has now gotten a whole lot more dangerous with the addition of new arenas—some of which include deadly pits.

WEAKNESSES: With all the carnage and nice effects, Derby is strangely not that fun of a game to play. Psygnosis attempted to improve the racing elements, but instead they're worse in different ways. The bottom line is that

the first version of the game wasn't that much fun, and neither is the second.
WHAT'S NEW: Cars can now flip, fly up in the air and get knocked upside-down, unlike the original. Los Angelino drivers will feel right at home, which is strange since this game was developed in Europe.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: There certainly is no racing game like Psygnosis' Destruction Derby, but right now, that might be considered a good thing. It's too bad that this unique game couldn't be a good one. With a few little tweaks here and there, perhaps it can be.

A slick, fast-paced simulation

●●● "Solid"

Formula One

PlayStation
Publisher: Sony
Developer: Psygnosis
Difficulty: Hard
IN A NUTSHELL: This is Europe's (and Psygnosis') answer to America's Andretti Racing, only it's all Formula One fare. This game tries to be realistic, while adding many arcade elements, but it doesn't entirely work.
STRENGTHS: For the racing sim enthusiast who must have realism over everything else, Formula One answers the call. An extensive amount of car, track and computer AI modifications rounds out the lengthy list of options.
WEAKNESSES: Unless players are willing to go the distance in Sim Mode, driving the arcade portion is boring and predictable, especially since the cars will not crash under any conditions. What's a racing game without crashes?
WHAT'S NEW: Not a lot except for the fact that it is a very good-looking and extensive sim for a console system.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: Driving in inclement weather is especially impressive with unique light and mist effects coming from the back ends of the cars.

editors' choice SEGA RALLY

Sega Rally is easily one of the best 32-Bit racing games

●●●●● "Awesome"

Sega Rally

Sega
Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega of Japan
Difficulty: Moderate
IN A NUTSHELL: This perfect arcade-to-home conversion is one of the most playable racing games on a console system.
STRENGTHS: Sega Rally is best played as a two-player game, but is still very entertaining when driving solo. The graphics are top-notch and was one of the first games to really show what the Saturn is capable of.
WEAKNESSES: Like almost every other Sega racing game that has been ported from the arcade, there are very few tracks to drive on. Normally, I'd penalize heavily for this, but I can't bring myself to do it since it's such a great game.
WHAT'S NEW: This is the first Sega Rally, and I hope there's another.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: This was one of the first 32-Bit racing games where you could slosh your vehicles around in the dirt, water and mud.

Top Strategies to Burn Rubber at Video Racing

Car Setup
Using the correct car setup is one of the most important (as well as most overlooked) factors in a racing sim. Often a sim cannot be won until the car is optimized for the racing situation.

Automatic vs. Stick
Don't be afraid of using stick! Most of the time using manual transmission enables higher top speeds as well as greater car control and acceleration throughout the entire game.

Hidden Cars
Most racing sims today have hidden cars that can be accessed through codes or winning all the tracks. Sometimes alternative vehicles are available as well like the horse in Daytona or the scooter in Peak Performance.

Controller Setup
If your favorite racing sim offers controller setup, use it! Having the brake or gas buttons in awkward locations on the controller can be detrimental to your performance, so put them where they are most comfortable.

Analog Controllers
Analog controllers allow smooth turning and acceleration in the games that accept them. Look for our review of the best racing peripherals on page 71.

Cornering
In many racing sims cornering is the key to success. It's best to take them high and come out low, in essence straightening them out as much as possible.

Speed Moderation
Take it easy Francis! Gunning the car off the bat will usually result in constant spinouts and wrecks. Instead concentrate on finessing the car around corners and opponents.

The Playbook

Cool Racing Tips, Tricks and Strategies You Need to Win!

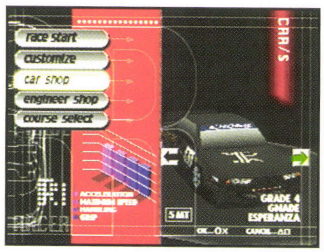
Rage Racer
Sony PlayStation

Raging Strategy

For Arcade racing it's tough to beat Namco's Rage Racer. Since Rage plays much the same as its predecessor Ridge Racer, some of the old rules still apply. First, the most obvious and annoying, don't hit the walls or other racers, as this will almost stop you in your tracks. It is better to go slowly around a corner or another car than to risk losing that time to a collision.

It is to your advantage to use manual transmission over automatic especially when climbing hills where racers can maximize RPM in the higher gears. Using stick will result in higher speeds on all portions of the tracks so use it!

Select the cars that have a high level of acceleration and handling over the cars that are just set up for pure speed. Most of the freaky fast machines lose valuable traction in the corners.



Rage Racer
Sony PlayStation

Mirror Codes

To race backward on any of the tracks, just select a race and hold **L1 + R1 + Select + Start** until the race begins to get a mirrored version. To turn off the rear-view mirror, pause the game and press **L1** while holding **Triangle**. To restore the mirror, just do it again.

The Mirror Mode will allow you to attack each one of the tracks in reverse.

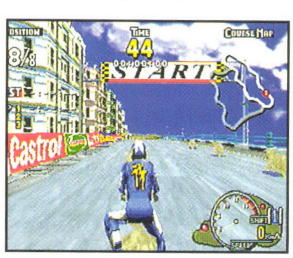
Trick Plays

Daytona USA: CCE
Sega Saturn

Backward Tracks Mode
At the Course Select Screen, you must press and hold the X, Y and Z buttons. Then select your track with A or C buttons. At the Course Select Screen, the words "Mirror Mode" will appear on the left side. You will now have the ability to race backward on the tracks!

Manx TT
Sega Saturn

Sheep Mode
At the "Select Transmission" Screen, press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Z, Y. When the game begins, all players will be riding sheep!

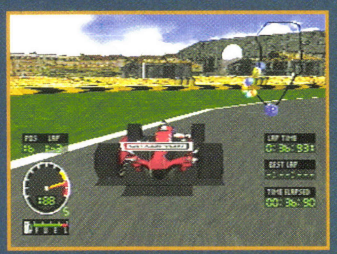


Andretti Racing

Sony PlayStation

Speed Freak

Maximum downforce will allow you to hug the corners tightly.



First and foremost, the key to winning in Andretti Racing in both Indy and Stock Car Modes is setting up the vehicles correctly. Forget about painstakingly trying every possible airfoil, gear ratio combination in search of the best mix. Simply set both front and rear airfoils to maximum downforce. This will allow you to hug the corners without fear of spinout. To maximize acceleration, set the gear ratio all the way to the left which will enable the fastest pickup with just a slightly slower top speed. Use the automatic transmission unless you are really into shifting gears. Finally, select the soft tires to maximize grip in the corners. With the car setup done, attack the track as a real racer would. Go high into the corners and come out low, (or vice versa) straightening them as much as possible. Avoid traveling in the pack as touching other cars really slows you down. It is best to use the brake going into corners while keeping the gas on at the same time. To do this, simply configure the controller with the brake button as the top R1 button; this will allow you to always have the gas on using the "X" button while using the brake sparingly with your index finger. Once cornering is mastered, as well as managing your pit stops in the longer races, the rest will fall into place as will the checkered flag.

Andretti Racing

Sony PlayStation

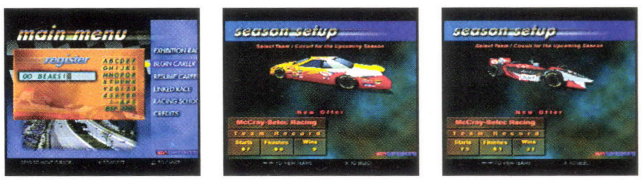
High Performance

ACCESS HIDDEN TRACKS:

Here are two codes to enter that will access higher performance cars for your next race. Just choose "Begin Career" and enter your name as: **GO BEARS!** or **GO BRUINS!** depending on what type of car you wish to race in. Then at the next screen choose from several performance cars with incredible records!

EXTRA CAR OPTIONS:

Here's an easy way to change a few extra options on your car next time you race. Just begin a race and then press Start to pause. Select the option, "Race Statistics" and then press and hold buttons: **L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + X + Circle** simultaneously. This should bring up a new menu full of car options you can adjust to modify your car to improve your racing ability.



Enter the Stock Car code at the Registry Screen to allow you to select high-performance cars with better records.

Wave Race 64

Nintendo 64

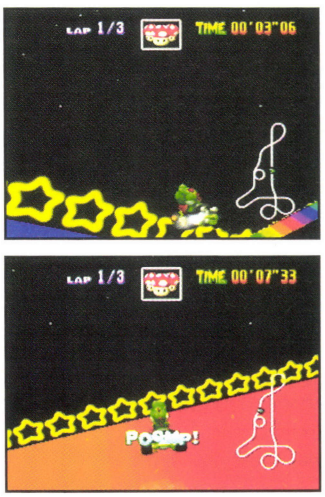
Ride the Dolphin

Choose Stunt Mode from the Main Menu. Select your watercraft. Now, you must make sure that you choose Dolphin Park on the Course Select Screen. Now you will begin your race. To get the trick to work, you must pass through every ring and perform every stunt within the course. Once you do this, you will hear a dolphin squeak at you. Now go back to the Main Menu and choose Championship Mode with the skill of Normal. Pick the Warm Up and when choosing your watercraft, hold Down on the analog stick and press the A button until you start your race. Now you will be in Dolphin Park riding on the back of a dolphin instead of your watercraft!

Mario Kart 64

Nintendo 64

Shortcuts



Many courses have shortcuts, but the most impressive one exists on the last course, Rainbow Road. At the start of the race is a huge downhill slope. Just before you head down it, jump (press Z) and turn right (left if the course is flipped). This may take some practice. If done right, you'll hit the track again—in first place!

Quick Codes

Rally Cross
Sony PlayStation

Banzai!

To enter these wild codes you have to start a new season. Enter one of the codes as your new season name. Press X when done and back up to the Main Menu. Now select Single Race and go from there.

BANZAI: No car collisions
FAT TIRES: Extra wide tires
FEATHER: 3/4 normal gravity
FLOAT: 1/2 the normal gravity
NOVISCOUS: water, mud, surf and sand won't slow you down
NO WHEELS: Drive your car around without any tires
RADBRAD: Realistic gravity
SPINNER: Wheels will turn 90 degrees
STONE: Twice normal gravity
WHEELS: Drive around with no body and just your tires

Formula One
Sony PlayStation

Bizarre Cheats

Here are some cheats to enter after selecting your driver and the track you wish to race on. To enter them, go to the Practice, Qualify and Race Screen and hold down the Select button while entering the following codes. If you can't access the codes, then you need to enter them faster.

FOR BIKE MODE:
Down, Up, Circle, Triangle, Right, Up, Square, Triangle
FOR BUGGY MODE:
Right, Up, Triangle, Left, Up, Square, Triangle
FOR GIBBERISH MODE:
Left, Circle, Up, Down, Down, Right, Circle, Square, Square
FOR LAVA MODE:
Square, Circle, Up, Right, Right, Circle, X
FOR BONUS TRACK:
Left, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, Up, Right

The Playbook

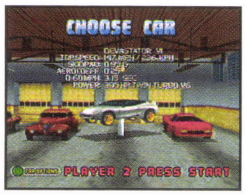
Cruis'n USA
Nintendo 64

Cruis'n to Victory

RACE NEW TRACKS:
This trick will give you access to three new tracks in the game. On "Choose Race" Screen, highlight US 101 and hold L + Left-C + Down-C to access Golden Gate Park. Highlight Beverly Hills and hold L + Up-C + Right-C. Highlight Grand Canyon and hold L + Right-C + Down-C to access San Francisco.

Enter the code to have the option to race on three new courses.

ACCESS NEW CARS:
At the "Choose Car" Screen, highlight any of the cars except for the red Ferrari. The trick will not work on this car. Once any of the others is highlighted (it will spin around), press and hold the Top, Left and Bottom C buttons simultaneously. The vehicle you highlighted will change into a different one! You can now play the game as a police car, a jeep or even a school bus! Keep holding these buttons and press Start to choose that vehicle.



Entering the above code will give you access to three alternate vehicles. What could be better than tearing through the streets in a squad car or a big, yellow school bus?

Destruction Derby 2
Sony PlayStation

Access All Tracks

This code will access all those tracks that you normally can't unlock, such as "Black Sail Valley," without having to compete and complete a division. To access the tracks, using controller one, go into the Race Mode Screen and select either Wrecking Racing or Stock Car Racing. Then select "Championship" at the Race Type Screen. You will enter a Name Entry Screen. Here enter your name as: **MACSrPOO** and then hit End. You should appear at the Main Screen and the Track Option will have a red cross through it. Go back into Race Mode and choose a mode and then a race type. Now, if you access the Track Select Option you should be able to choose from any of the tracks listed. You will also be able to select any of the tracks, such as "The Pit" and "Death Bowl" if you choose "Destruction Derby" as your Race Mode.

Jet Moto
Sony PlayStation

Unlock Every Race

Go to the Options Screen and set the Difficulty to Amateur and the Trophy Presenter to Male. Then return to the Main Screen by pressing Start and enter this code: Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, Left. Now return to the Options Screen by going left once and pressing X. Then set the Difficulty to Professional and the Trophy Presenter to Rider's Choice. Return to the Main Menu by pressing Start and enter the following: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right. You will hear "cha-ching" if you've entered it correctly. You now have access to all tracks!

Successfully entering this code will give you the ability to race all of the tracks available.

Take the wheel...

Racing

Gadgets and gear to help you get even more out of your racing games

Sega Analog

Originally released for the game "NiGHTS," Sega's Analog controller can be used with almost any older Saturn racing games be it Rally, Daytona or Hang-On GP. But to really experience the advantage of the controller, it's best to use it with the recently released Daytona: CCE or Manx TT.

The unique "tracking ball," which is manipulated with the left thumb, will turn the motorcycle or car gradually around a curve instead of an abrupt movement which is usually the case when using a digital controller. The acceleration button also allows for a gradual increase or decrease of speed depending on how much it is pressed. While we can't prove the controller will better your times, it did help us do a lot better in Manx TT and Daytona: CCE.

neGcon analog

The neGcon by Namco is a unique hand-held controller that twists in the middle to emulate the turning motion of the car or motorcycle on screen. While the controller was not compatible with Andretti Racing, it was compatible with Sony's Rally Cross and Namco's Rage Racer (to name a few). Providing us with the most dramatic improvement over the standard digital controller, the neGcon let us take turns in both Rally Cross and Rage Racer, at speeds far faster than possible with the standard controller, thus improving our overall times greatly once we got used to twisting to turn instead of hitting pads or buttons.

Mad Catz Wheel

The Mad Catz analog steering wheel/pedal combination worked out quite nicely in our Andretti Racing challenge. The reason it fared well was mainly due to the sensitivity throughout the range of the turning radius. Turn the wheel a tiny bit and the car turned a tiny bit, etc. The floor pedals proved to be just as effective, providing good variable acceleration and stopping depending on the amount they were pushed. Did the wheel help our times in Andretti Racing? No, none of our times improved over the regular controller but the actual interactive racing experience was heightened. The main problem with any racing wheel is keeping it stationary on the table while it's being used. Solve that problem and you're golden.

Nuby VRFi

The Nuby analog wheel had a few minor problems. First of all, there were no pedals so all braking and accelerating was done from buttons on the wheel itself. While this is not really a problem, the buttons had to be configured from the game to be the closest ones to the thumbs while gripping the steering wheel. This configuration is essential so that the gas may be kept on while using the brakes throughout the game. The problem is, a lot of racing sims don't offer button configuration. As a result, players are forced to take their finger off the gas in order to hit the brake which ultimately slows the car too much and is bad for times. In the end, the Nuby VRFi did not help us as much in our quest for superhuman Andretti Racing times.

Per4mer Turbo Wheel

Although Mario Kart 64, Cruis'n USA and PilotWings 64 are the only games for the Nintendo 64 that can use a steering wheel, others such as Top Gear Rally by Kemco and F-Zero 64 by Nintendo are looming on the horizon. So it's safe to say the new wheel made just for the N64 will be better utilized in the future. The problem is, will you actually want to use it?! As tested on Mario Kart 64, the Per4mer had some functionality problems. For example, trying to execute a power-slide was tough because the wheel had to be turned while simultaneously pushing a button combo on the base. Too much button work for us to really concentrate on while driving. In addition, the unit seemed a little flimsy and possibly prone to damage from rough use. Of course, that is pure speculation on our part.

the high FLYING WYNALDA and his sidekick ALEXI LALAS

Soccer doesn't have the tradition that other sports have...baseball is a part of our cultural makeup, but with MLS that could all change

By Todd Mowatt

All you need to play the world's oldest and most popular spectator sport is a sunny day, a pair of running shoes and a soccer ball.

Eric Wynalda and Alexi Lalas are two of the U.S. National team's best players. Lalas and Wynalda are soccer pioneers in North America. The U.S. remains one of the few countries where soccer still isn't considered a "religion," but its popularity is growing, thanks to the performance of the U.S. National team in the 1994 World Cup. Two of the U.S. team's star players were Lalas and Wynalda. The success of the National team sparked the formation of Major League Soccer.

The MLS is well into its second season. Lalas and Wynalda play for two of the league's best franchises. But soccer is just one part of their game; Lalas and Wynalda are trying to bicycle-kick away the negative image of the modern-day athlete.

Before my interview even started with the two players, they were contemplating their next move after they were done scrimmaging with the U.S. National team. They weren't planning to go shopping for a Mercedes Benz or pondering how to get the next freebee from a corporate sponsor. They were planning a trip to a local Miami hospital to visit the bedside of a child who was recently diagnosed with cancer. Sure it's a good headline grabber, a well-positioned tug at one's heart strings. But there were no headlines, no media were invited or notified. You see, Wynalda loves kids, and whenever his schedule permits, he will hold a youth soccer clinic in the San Jose suburbs to teach what he knows about the game he loves, because he wants to grow the sport.

EAST
22
WEST
MLS
11
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EGM: What will it take for soccer to grow in North America and take the next step to become one of the premier sports?

Eric Wynalda: Soccer doesn't have the tradition that the other sports have, but you have to consider baseball to be a part of our cultural makeup. With the advent of MLS that could all change. It's just the way things are. In saying that, you have to look at the success the U.S. National soccer team has had over the last couple of years. Fans are starting to recognize soccer as one of the premier sports and they are getting excited about the game. People are starting to see their country becoming successful at the highest level and that's bringing new fans to the game. With Major League Soccer (MLS) coming onto the scene as well, I think it's about time that the millions of kids across the country who already play soccer can now see and identify with U.S. professional soccer players and have role models to connect with like they do in other sports. Now for the first time they can watch MLS games and have heroes and see soccer stars who they can look up to. The professional league gives soccer credibility and shows kids that soccer isn't just a game that is played recreationally. MLS gives the entire sport some much-needed credibility.

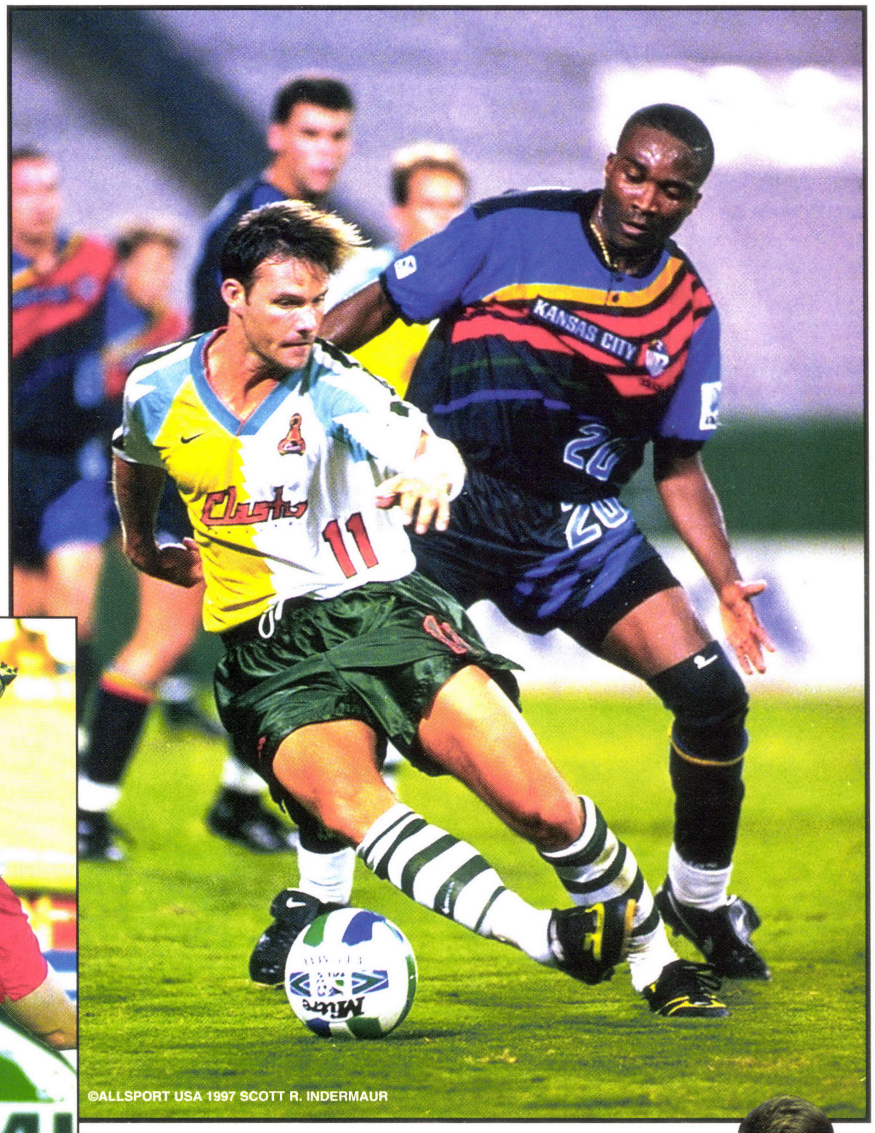
EGM: As the two premier players in the sport, do you feel any pressure that the success or failure of the sport rests on your shoulders and those of your teammates?

Alexi Lalas: First of all, I don't think any of us feel that being a professional athlete is a burden, especially being a professional soccer player and considering the fact that for a very long time it was difficult to be a professional soccer player and to make a living. Now we are fortunate enough to make a very good living at it. I think there is a characteristic that runs through all American soccer players and that is to promote and to be soccer's ambassadors and continue to be pioneers for the sport. Doing the appearances and spreading the gospel of soccer. It's something I think a lot of American soccer players enjoy and feel it is a part of their job to do. I don't think it's something Eric or myself consider a burden. Together as professionals we are working toward something special and we feel as though we are part of something special. We have sacrificed and worked hard along with a lot of other people to help soccer grow and to make sure it continues to flourish long after our playing days are over.

EGM: If you could go back in time and play on any soccer team in history and play with any of soccer's greatest players, where would you play and which players would you want to play with?

Eric: I think right now is a pretty exciting time. If I could have held off being born for about 15 more years; that would have been the thing to do. Too often people look ahead or look back. Currently I'm focused and am very excited about soccer's future now and the 1998 World Cup.
Alexi: As with any new sport or league,

many years from now, people will look back with respect for what we as founding fathers for the sport of soccer did here and hopefully respect us for what we were able to accomplish. If you look at it from a truly financial perspective, we could be playing overseas or somewhere else right now. As the sport grows and evolves, the players will be making a lot more money than we are right now. But that's the way sports work, and some day Eric and I will be sitting out on a porch somewhere complaining about the fact that when we were playing we didn't make any money and we did it for the love of the game. Kids then will be coming up and playing soccer and will be signing multimillion-dollar contracts and past players will be saying that they don't care about the sport. That's just how it works, but hopefully we won't be bitter old men and we will appreciate the fact that we played a part in creating the groundswell and elevating the popularity of the game of soccer. Right now we are creating a legacy for younger soccer players to follow. We want to be remembered as pioneers of the game of soccer.



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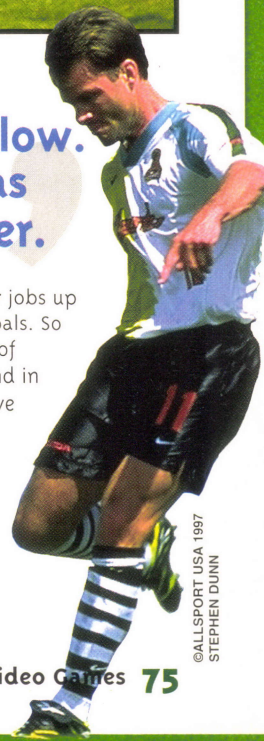
We are creating a legacy for younger soccer players to follow. We want to be remembered as pioneers of the game of soccer.

EGM: What's the most important position on the soccer field?

Alexi: I would say from my standpoint it would have to be a defender. I think Eric will have a different point of view. As with any sport, each position on the soccer field has its own specific things that as a player you need to do well. I could never hope to be as prolific a scorer and do the things that Eric does as a forward. It's not something that I do and it's not something that I'm good at. As important as that is, if I play a very good game defensively and we don't score, we don't win. If Eric scores a bunch of goals and I let them score a bunch of goals, we still don't win.

Eric: The most important position on the field, hmmm! I would think that there isn't one position any more important than another. All of the positions together are important. Soccer is a team sport and without good goalkeeping and good defense, we can't do our jobs up front which is scoring goals. So the two kind of play off of each other and work hand in hand. But then again, I've chosen the route of trying to be the match winner and to me that's more fun than trying to stop some of the world's top players from scoring. To me that's a tough job!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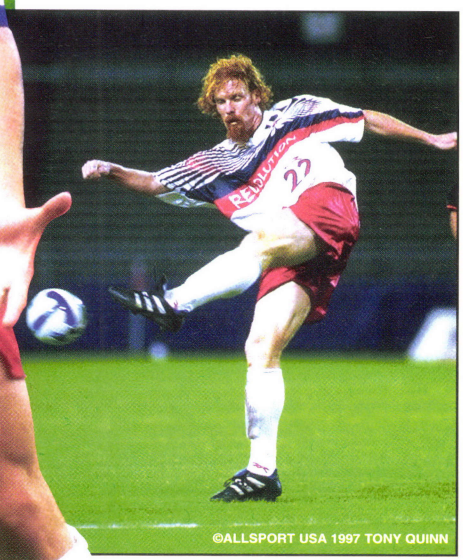
EGM: Who are some of the young up-and-coming soccer stars, who you and Alexi will be passing the torch to as the premier players on the U.S. National team and in the MLS over the next few years?

Eric: I've been a member of the National Soccer team for a long time and you used to know where the pressure was coming from. There were only one or two guys who really stood out and you knew they were trying to take your job. Now we have a situation where there are a lot of MLS players who have earned a shot on the National team. So now there are 12 to 15 players who are looking to get some National team experience. They want the national exposure.

Alexi: We are very lucky as a sport, that MLS has come about and has given younger soccer players a chance to shine and show off their skills. I think that next year when the World Cup comes around, you'll see the core players who were there

People do a lot of strange things to get your autograph...I look at it in terms of the fact that there are people out there who want soccer players' autographs....

in 1994, but there will also be a few new faces added to the team. Guys like Eddie Pope who plays for D.C. United. He just came out of college and has played very well, not only for his MLS team, but for the National team. He has a bright future ahead of him. Guys like Brian McBride who came up through MLS and has done well. He's an incredible goal scorer. Soccer is a game played with a lot of emotion both on and off the field. Once we get someone out to see an MLS game or see the National team play, they become soccer fans in a hurry. They see the energy with the players on the field and the enthusiasm of the fans in the stands.



EGM: What's the nuttiest thing a fan has done to get an autograph from you?

Alexi: Oh man! I've been chased down, followed around. I've had people drive me off the road. I've had people run into my hotel room, knock on the door of my house. I was in a bar the other night and some guy wanted a picture with me. He didn't have his camera. He sat his friend down next to me and told him to keep buying me beer. He had to run two miles to get his camera and come all the way back. So I thought that was pretty cool. That guy was a devoted fan. People do a lot of strange things to get your

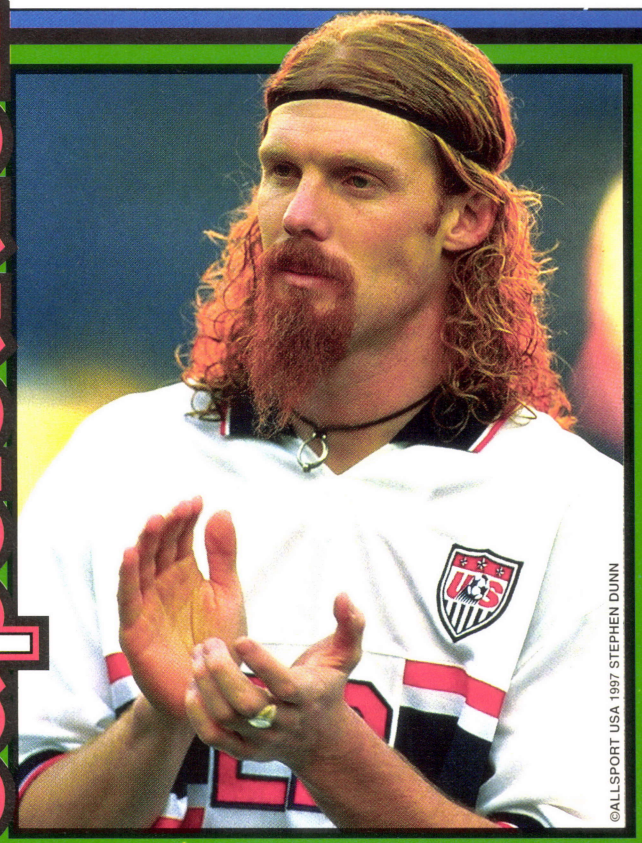
autograph. It's flattering, but I look at it much more in terms of the fact that there are people out there who want soccer players' autographs and respect what we do.
Eric: When we go on the road, I've had people sit in front of my room for hours until I got there. They'll call around to 50 rooms until they get your room and ask you for an autograph. I had one guy ask if he could have his picture taken with me. I said sure, then the guy asked me how long I was going to be there. I said I didn't know. An hour and 10 minutes later the guy brought the picture back and asked me to sign it. He had gone to a one-hour photo place, had

the film developed so he could have me sign it. I thought that was pretty crazy.

EGM: How avid of video gamers are you and now that you have codesigned BMG and Z-Axis' MLS soccer game do you see yourselves playing more video games?

Eric: On the road we have a lot of time on our hands. We are in hotel rooms for hundreds of hours a year and gaming is a great way to pass the time. I am a big fan of NHL Hockey and I've dabbled with Madden. I am also a big fan of golfing games. I was never really into soccer. The way BMG and Z-Axis have gone about putting their MLS game together, they have made it very realistic. People who love the game of soccer will love this game.
Alexi: I'm not a major gamer. I have a PlayStation and I have a big television and once in a while I will pound a way for a while. But the majority of my free time is taken up with my music.

Superstitions



Shoelace? What Shoelace?

Superstition plays a role with many professional athletes in all sports. The U.S. National soccer team is trying to qualify for the 1998 World Cup in France and they are no exception.

Recently we spoke with the U.S. National Soccer team's equipment manager John Cope to get the inside scoop on what crazy things players on the U.S. National team do before games.

Eric Wynalda freely admits being "a nutcase" about his pregame rituals, including going to Starbucks Coffee with his MLS team in tow, all of them wearing their sweats before each game. He listens to two Pearl Jam tunes before each soccer game he plays.

Alexi Lalas, on the other hand, was very secretive about his superstitions. According to Cope, Lalas makes him get a used shoelace before each game so he can wear it instead of a headband during games. Marcelo Balboa also wears a shoelace. "I don't ask them why, it's just the way it is and I accept that."

Apart from that, Cope said, "Certain players don't like wearing certain numbers. Many players won't wear the number 13. I put numbers in the back of the guys' shorts and shirts and I put 13 in one guy's gear and he threw them back at me three days in a row. I had to give him an entirely new training kit."

"I've seen some keepers sit in a corner and just bounce the ball and catch it over and over again. Before games players do things to help them relax. Things that they have done their entire careers.

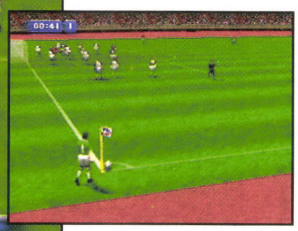
"I've had players ask me for a piece of green Wrigley's gum. They chew one half before the game and the other half at halftime.

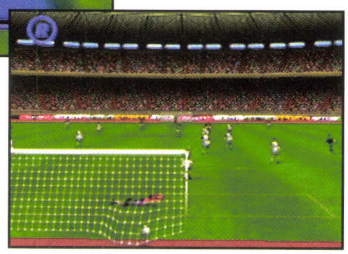
Some guys if they score wear the same socks game after game and tell you not to wash them as not to wash the luck away."

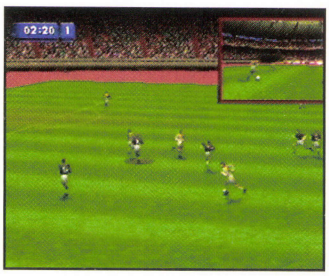
FIFA 98

EA Sports chooses soccer to kick off their 64-Bit lineup

FIFA's 64-Bit options include the fancy "Picture-in-Picture" Viewing Mode.







fact file

- system: Nintendo 64
- publisher: EA
- developer: EA Sports
- % complete: 85%
- difficulty: Variable
- players: 1-4
- release date: 2nd Qtr. '97

"EA is making sure the 64-Bit version is chock-full of features."

FIFA gained dominance as a soccer video game when it made its presence felt on the 32-Bit 3DO system years ago. Ever since that high point, it has grown in popularity as one of EA Sports' most internationally recognized soccer games.

FIFA 64 looks very much like the previous 32-Bit editions, except with many of the Nintendo 64's special hardware visual effects in use. For example, the soccer players and the field no longer appear grainy when they are close to the screen, but instead are very smooth. As is true with most FIFA titles, EA Sports is making sure the 64-Bit version is chock-full of features even though it is on a less spacious cartridge format.

One of the most interesting items is the "picture-in-picture" camera which allows you to independently see two different camera angles at once via a small box in the corner of the screen much like a fancy TV set. If the PIP isn't your style, then you can just pick from one of eight different camera angles, much like previous versions of the game. Other features include three different commentators and Dolby Surround Sound to enhance the sense of playing in a real-life soccer arena.

With FIFA 64 ready to hit stores shelves, Electronic Arts is looking to make a statement by presenting their first 64-Bit game ever. Expect only the best.

64-Bit technology gives FIFA 64 a realistic look unlike previous versions of FIFA.

Did You Know?

Last year the newly formed Major League Soccer attracted a surprising 20,086 fans per game.

Goal Storm '97

Soccer

PlayStation pioneers provide Goal Storm with a kickin' update

"The developers made some adjustments to the game's control system."

Konami, who released one of the first soccer games for the Sony PlayStation, is giving their hit title Goal Storm an update for the '97 season with Goal Storm '97. The game retains the intuitive gameplay of the original, with the addition of some new features.

In order to make the new version even better than the original, Konami reviewed their motion-capture data to produce more realistic movements and animations even more lifelike than in the original. With the use of polygonal characters, Goal Storm '97 gives gamers the option of a number of different camera angles as well as a number of exciting replay options. Gameplay can now be viewed from close, medium and far distances from the field in the side view, as well as from one of the goals. In addition, players who score spectacular goals are rewarded with an instant replay that can be reviewed and advanced frame-by-frame so as not to miss a moment of the action. Gamers can also rotate the point of view of the replay and zoom in and out.

Players are guided by an on-screen radar display that indicates the position of teammates and opposition alike (this can be turned off if the player finds it too distracting). This is helpful when the player needs to eat up a lot of the field, allowing him to pass the ball to players off-screen.

The developers also made some important adjustments to the game's control system, and the result is quicker, more responsive and more accurate gameplay. Passing between players employs an intuitive point-and-shoot method, and defensive moves are equally simple to execute.

With a number of new features and smoother, more responsive controls than the original Goal Storm, Goal Storm '97 is set to surpass its predecessor. Soccer fans, keep your eyes open for this one.

fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: Sony
- developer: Sony
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1-4
- release date: Now

Loft a ball toward a teammate and he is likely to field it on his head or chest, depending on his distance from the oncoming ball.

Did You Know?

MLS games had an average of 3.37 goals per game scored, while Germany's Bundesliga had 2.71 goals per game.

Soccer

International Superstar Soccer

Konami's soccer game could be the best ever

"The N64's analog joystick moves players from a slow trot to an all-out sprint and anywhere in between."

fact file

- system: Nintendo 64
- publisher: Konami
- developer: Konami
- % complete: 95%
- difficulty: Hard
- players: 1-4
- release date: May '97

As the first soccer title to come out for the N64, Konami's International Superstar Soccer is setting a very high watermark for all other soccer titles to follow. While the game bears a good resemblance to its recently released 32-Bit brother Goal Storm '97 both in appearance and gameplay, Superstar Soccer takes it all to another level.

The game, previously released in Japan as Perfect Striker, has been doing quite well overseas where the gaming public takes their soccer games very seriously. Unprecedented realism is abundantly clear through the sim's highly detailed 3-D graphics. Little things mean a lot such as the players' hand gestures and body movements when reacting to certain situations. For example, as the players make their way down field, they will keep their head in the direction of the defender while their body is moving at an angle. Other moves such as the slide-tackle, the header and the steal are also very realistic in appearance and execution.

Yet, even more impressive than the game's stellar graphics are its great gameplay and control. The N64's analog joystick moves players from a slow trot to an all-out sprint and anywhere in between, bringing control to a new high. If you were waiting for a good sports title to buy for the N64, now is the time.

Did You Know?

Walter Zenga, goalkeeper for the New England Revolution, had a metal spigot tossed at him during a game in Italy.

Impressive moments such as this shocking goal can be played back at several different angles for everyone's viewing pleasure.

VR Soccer '96

Soccer

The grandaddy of the 32-Bit soccer games can still hold its own

As one of the first sports sims to use 3-D polygonal players, VR Soccer paved the way for polygon-based sports sims.

Did You Know?

Ray Lassiter of the Tampa Bay Mutiny lead all MLS players with 27 goals last year.

Some like their sports titles to be fast and action-filled, pushing the limits of believability in favor of intense gameplay. Others want complete realism in the game, its appearance and even its statistical accuracy. VR Sports' VR Soccer strives for the latter in most aspects of the game.

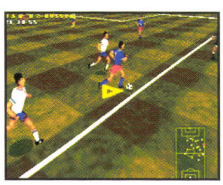
Like any other self-respecting 32-Bit soccer sim on the market, VR Soccer brings it to us using the latest in 3-D motion-capture technology. The on-screen action is brought to life by the semi-fluid polygonal players. To further the effect, a number of camera angles (six in all) rove around the ball carrier and the immediate vicinity creating a broadcast-like quality.

When it comes to team selection, this game has the goods. With 44 countries represented, setting up tournaments and cup competition could take a long time. If that were not enough for the stat freaks, individual players are ranked by their abilities and faults so that better players may be substituted in when the situation calls for it.

As far as gameplay goes, VR Soccer is competent if not a little inconsistent at times. Hitting a goal at half-field is not all that believable and can be bad for the game's image as a realistic sim. The same could be said for some of the movements of the players, who appear to be robotic at times. Inconsistencies aside, VR Soccer holds up pretty well as one of the first of the 32-Bit soccer sims to invade the market, consequently setting the pace for the ultrarealistic trend in 32-Bit soccer titles today.

fact file

- system: PlayStation
- publisher: VR Sports
- developer: Gremlin
- % complete: 100%
- difficulty: Moderate
- players: 1-4
- release date: Now



"VR Soccer holds up pretty well as one of the first of the 32-Bit soccer sims to invade the market..."

The Making of MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

Can a video game help grow a sport? Some would suggest that can be the case if the game is good enough.

It's already happened and one doesn't need to go too far back into gaming history to remember it. EA Sports' NHL Hockey franchise for the Sega Genesis allowed gamers to play as their favorite players and as a result the players became household names.

BMG And Z-Axis are currently working on their first sports product together and they are hoping that their Major League Soccer title will bring new fans to the sport in much the same way NHL Hockey did.

"What I think NHL Hockey did, which I am very hopeful that our MLS game will be able to do, is make some MLS players household names for kids and soccer fans," said Don Traeger, BMG's VP of Global Product Development. "My kid can rattle off any hockey player in any lineup on any NHL team because he knows the superstars. It's pretty neat to be with a sport from day one and watch it grow. This is the first time that anyone has had a chance to do that."

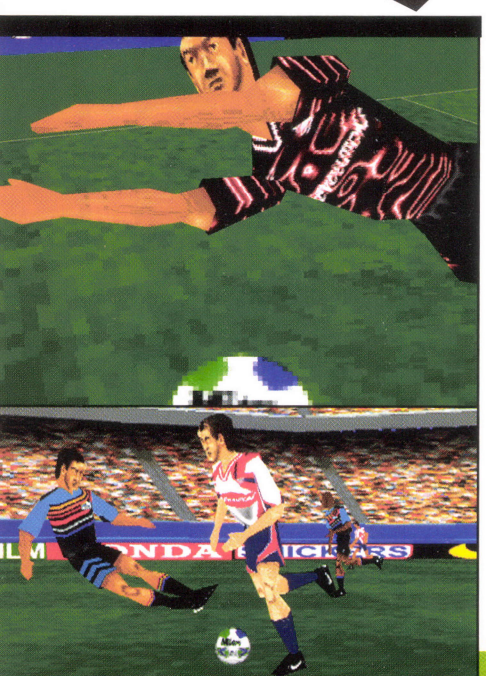
Some people make games and go home. Some people live the games they are making.

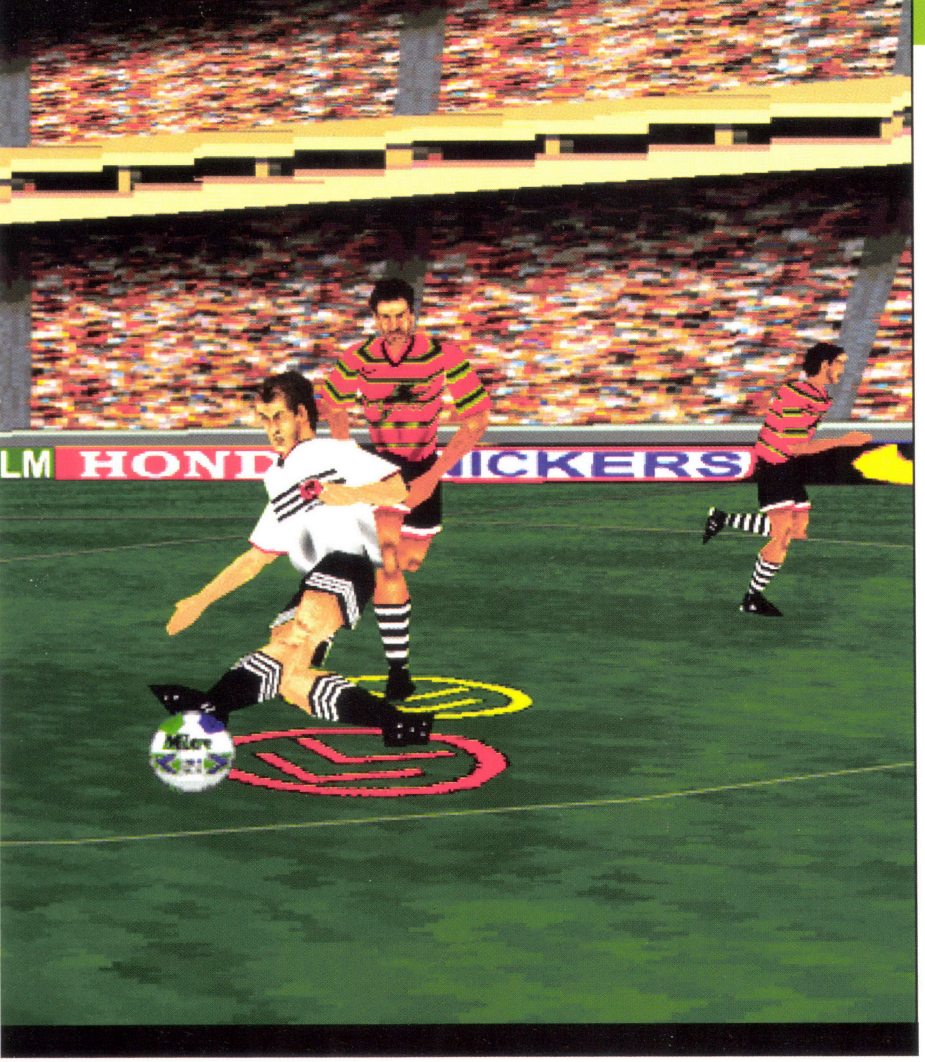
That sounds rather odd, but the Z-Axis team has season tickets at midfield for the MLS San Jose Clash and they attend every game.

"I know exactly where they sit," Eric Wynalda, forward for the MLS San Jose Clash and a co-designer of BMG's Major League Soccer said. "Gordon (Bellamy, creative director for Z-Axis) is the game. He's living it. When I'm on the field, sometimes I feel as though he's out there standing next to me."

Once a week the entire Z-Axis crew dons their spikes and takes to the local soccer pitch, and everyone involved in the production of the game plays to get a better understanding of the way the ball moves and the finer details of the game of soccer.

"They are taking the guesswork out of making the game," said Alexi Lalas, co-designer of BMG's MLS title and defender on the MLS' New England Revolution. "Anything they are not sure of they ask. Gordon once drove four hours just to have lunch with us and speak to us for 30 minutes. They pick our brains to understand what it's like to be on





> **Gordon is the game! He's living it. When I'm on the field sometimes I feel as though he's standing next to me.**

the field. Everything from our jerseys, even each of our faces, have been attached. Sometimes when I look at the game it looks as though I have been shrunk and put into the game."

Eric Wynalda was about to enter the hospital to have a hernia operation when the Z-Axis Major League Soccer production team was running out of time to motion- capture Eric's movements. The day before his operation Eric had his movements captured so they could be put into the game.

"They showed us some of the movements that they wanted to put into the game. I told them that I wanted to do those movements," he said. "They put all of these bubbles all over me and I was in there for two hours, jumping off of walls, doing volleys and dribbling the ball. Then they showed me the captured movements and explained how it worked. It was amazing how quickly they put it together. But they said those movements were just the markers and told me to hold on. Then they said they were going to put my actual MLS uniform on the character on the screen and add my face. They turned a bunch of colored dots into a miniature version of me right in front of my eyes."

Z-Axis is not taking anything for granted—attention to detail, getting things right, making sure things are perfect. Everything from the physics of the ball to the Nike swoosh on the players' uniforms and shoes have been re-created.

"BMG understands having actual players is a very important resource," Alexi concluded. "If guys like Eric and I can't wait to play this game, they must be doing something right. They've tried to understand how the game works, how soccer feels. How soccer looks. We know what's real and what's not. I will be proud of this game because it will be an authentic representation of the game of soccer."

BMG's Don TRAEGER

Starting a sports studio from scratch is no easy venture. Just ask Don Traeger, BMG's vice president of Global Product development. He's done just that.

He's partnered with Z-Axis, a team of wily sports industry veterans with a penchant for detail, many of who used to work at Electronic Arts. Don himself is an ex-EA Sports employee.

With all of the major sports more popular than soccer in the U.S., BMG and Z-Axis will release their Major League Soccer (MLS) title this summer. But why soccer?

"Children are in tune with soccer and the MLS is a very young, enthusiastic league," Traeger said. "It reminds me a lot of Electronic Arts in the old days when we were a bunch of young aggressive guys who really wanted to make it. It feels really good to be working with the MLS folks and I think they will be successful and that's why we chose soccer as our first franchise title."

Many 32-Bit games have not had the leap in either gameplay or technology and Traeger and Z-Axis are out to change all that.

"It's tough to put the technology into words, it's really a combination of several things. To make something a success in this business, there's such an interwoven magic that has to happen between technology and the art. I think what you are seeing in our game is a combination of that happening. We're using motion capture to re-create the players' moves, but we're doing it in a completely different way that allows the user a lot of control. The texture mapping technology they are using to model the uniforms and the faces is spooky. The players look real. It looks like little people in there."

DARE2COMPARE

SOCCER

WE TELL YOU WHICH SOCCER GAMES ARE THE BEST!

Photos © ALLSPORT USA 1997

by Kraig Kujawa

Next-generation soccer games would have been lackluster were it not for Konami. What's amazing is that they created two entirely different soccer games—Goal Storm '97 for the PlayStation and Perfect Striker for the Nintendo 64. Each is the best soccer title on their respective systems.

THE STARTING LINEUP

DARE2COMPARE SOCCER

VR Soccer '96 is showing its age

A soccer series that's lost its luster

⚽⚽ "Weak"

VR Soccer '96

PlayStation/Saturn
Publisher: Interplay/VR Sports
Developer: Gremlin
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: This was one of the first soccer games to arrive on the PlayStation, and its age is showing. Not very good when it first came out, VR Soccer is all that less attractive of a soccer game now.

STRENGTHS: VR Soccer has a lot of teams and options, and the British play-by-play announcer has a sense of humor. Aside from that, there isn't much else to like about this game.

WEAKNESSES: The gameplay is sloppy, and the players move a little too fast. To make it worse, there is very little character animation, making the players appear like an incompetent puppeteer is controlling them. Also bear in mind that when I talk about a humorous British announcer in the strengths category, this game can't be very exciting.

WHAT'S NEW: This is the first game that was published by VR Sports. Although the game has been out a year, no plans have been announced for a sequel.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: You can select which referee will work the game, or have the game randomly choose one. They have different vision and discipline ratings.

⚽⚽ "Weak"

FIFA 97

PlayStation/Saturn
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Difficulty: Hard

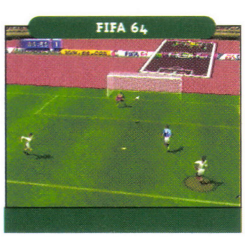
IN A NUTSHELL: EA Sports' long-running soccer series is back. This time, without a vengeance.

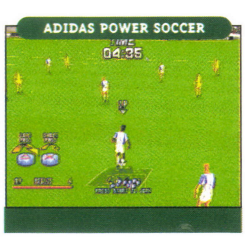
STRENGTHS: The ability to play fast-paced indoor soccer is pretty cool. Like other FIFAs, there are plenty of options, features and camera angles. The surround sound audio is good for those who can benefit from it. And you get access to the FIFA licensed teams.

WEAKNESSES: FIFA is really getting uninspired. Each version has more problems than the one before it. This time the 3-D graphics look much better, but they move slowly, and the animation is jerky. The entire control system is imprecise and makes it hard to make passes and scoot around the field. This game isn't much fun to play at all.

WHAT'S NEW: Indoor soccer. More detailed graphics. Well, they look better, but I dare you to try to move them around. FIFA needs to stop adding superfluous things and work on all of the things that it is doing wrong.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: FIFA allows you to play indoor arena soccer in addition to normal soccer.





editors' choice
Perfect Striker

The perfect soccer game

⚽⚽⚽⚽⚽ "Awesome"

Perfect Striker

Nintendo 64
Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: The name pretty much says it all. While not entirely perfect, this game is outstanding.

STRENGTHS: A brilliant soccer game, and the most beautiful one I've ever seen. The graphics are simply amazing, and the animation is incredible. This game is extremely realistic, except for a few minor details. There are plenty of options, and things to keep hardcore fans very happy. To add the icing on the cake, four players can also play simultaneously.

WEAKNESSES: Oh, there pretty much aren't any. The menus could look nicer, but that's about it. I simply refuse to nitpick at this title. It ain't gonna happen.

WHAT'S NEW: This will be in late June/early July. In the U.S. it will be called "International SuperStar Soccer 64," or some fancy variation thereof.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: This has the best graphics ever witnessed in a soccer game. All hail to Konami, the new king of soccer!

editors' choice
Goal Storm '97

Goal Storm returns as the best PlayStation soccer game

Goal Storm '97

⚽⚽⚽⚽⚽ "Awesome"

PlayStation
Publisher: Konami
Developer: Konami
Difficulty: Hard

IN A NUTSHELL: Goal Storm '97 has an intricate blend of realism and fun. It's challenging, and may be a little difficult for novice players to pick up, but it's one of the few games worth the struggle.

STRENGTHS: Whenever soccer games try to be completely realistic, many of them simply cease to be fun. This is not the case with Goal Storm '97, the most realistic soccer game I've ever played. Even more shocking is that this simulation is unbelievably addicting. Goal Storm delivers great graphics, impeccable control and plenty of options.

WEAKNESSES: The one minor flaw is that only two players can compete. Pity. It would have been a great four-player game.

WHAT'S NEW: It's amazing how completely different the two versions of Goal Storm are. The first Goal Storm was pretty bad, but this new edition is easily the best PlayStation soccer game. I can't stress enough how much better a game this is from the previous version.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: No soccer game matches Goal Storm '97's realism. Konami's other soccer title, Perfect Striker, comes real close.

A big N64 disappointment

⚽⚽ "Weak"

FIFA 64
Nintendo 64

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: This game is very, very disappointing. One thing is certain—it's a good thing Perfect Striker is coming to rescue N64 soccer fans in the U.S.

STRENGTHS: The graphics are reasonably good and like all FIFA games, the essence of the sport is kept well intact. There are a few interesting features such as the "picture-in-a-picture" option which allows you to see two different camera views at once. It's like that use-

Photo/ © Doug Pensinger/ALLSPORT USA 1997

How The Features Stack Up

▼ GAMES / FEATURES ▶	Approx Number of Stadiums	Penalty Kick Practice	League Play	Trade Players	Create Players	Variable Weather	Number of Players
VR Soccer '96	One	No	Yes	No	No	No	1-2
FIFA 97	Lots	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	1-8
Perfect Striker	Lots	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1-4
Goal Storm '97	Four	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	1-2
FIFA 64	Lots	No	Yes	No	No	No	1-4
Adidas Power Soccer	One	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	1-4
WorldWide Soccer '97	Three	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1-4

less, gimmicky feature in television sets.
WEAKNESSES: The gameplay is nothing short of frustrating. The control is very sluggish and imprecise, making it hard to accomplish anything. The graphics look nice, but don't animate well. For example, it almost appears that the players are "skating" across the field. With the PIP camera turned on, the frame rate drops, making the game too sluggish to keep it turned on for long.
WHAT'S NEW: A lot, and not a lot. How's that for indecisiveness? The graphics are improved in some areas, but the gameplay is as bad as some of the more recent versions of FIFA.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: The PIP camera is unique, but it's not too practical.

The shoes aren't that good either

"Weak"

Adidas Power Soccer

PlayStation
Publisher: Sony
Developer: Psygnosis/FDI
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: This game isn't pleasant to look at, and it's not very much fun to play either. Adidas would have been better off putting their name on a different game.
STRENGTHS: Power Soccer has an incredible amount of teams to choose from. I've considered counting them all, but I just can't bring myself to do it. Let's say over 30, and call it even. Other than that, the presence of a Four-player Mode is the only other goodie worth mentioning in a positive light.
WEAKNESSES: This game is terribly unrealistic. The players consistently execute circus moves like they're the norm. Although Power Soccer is more of an arcade-action game, this unrealistic gameplay is a little too annoying.
WHAT'S NEW: Psygnosis creating a soccer game. This is the first time they attempted a sports game (other than racing) and they weren't up to the task.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: Well, there's a shoe label in the game title. How's that?

Saturn's only good soccer game

"Very Good"

WorldWide Soccer '97

Saturn
Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: This is the best soccer game on the Saturn. But to be honest, the competition wasn't very fierce.
STRENGTHS: Easy-to-learn gameplay even though the game is somewhat realistic. WorldWide soccer has better 3-D graphics than most soccer games, and is complete with fluent player animations. The attention to detail such as the players casting shadows during a night game and all of the various weather elements are nice additions. The commentary is pretty good too.
WEAKNESSES: Although very fun, WWS could benefit from being a little more realistic. It could also benefit from additional controls.
WHAT'S NEW: A total overhaul of the '96 version, which was excellent to begin with. Better graphics, control and gameplay. You can now set up plays, and the computer players are much more intelligent, adding more challenge.
WHAT'S UNIQUE: This is the only good soccer game for the Saturn.

The Playbook

Cool Soccer Tips, Tricks and Strategies You Need to Score Goals

Top Strategies to Score With Video Soccer

Passing
It sounds simple but moving the ball around to other players as you progress down field is the best way to execute an offensive drive to the goal.

Passing technique
Utilize the different styles of ball passing. Use the short pass and the tap-back pass to confuse defenders as you work your way up-field, as well as the long pass for fast-break attacks.

Formations
Almost all soccer games are loaded with formation options. If you are getting beat badly, put your men in an extreme defensive formation or gamble and go all out with five forwards.

Substitutions
Keep the players as fresh as possible by rotating in new men when performance on the field begins to fall.

Slide Tackle
This exciting maneuver is fun to do but can cause a lot of problems if overused, mainly due to the ensuing penalties and expulsions.

The "Header"
This move is very important in a corner-kick situation as you want to launch the ball into the cluster of men waiting by the goal where it can be headed into the net.

Sprinting
Use the sprinting or speed burst option as much as possible to catch up with ball carriers or outrun opponents nipping at your heals. Just be careful not to use up stamina if it is a factor.

Player Switching
Switch to the player closest to the ball manually instead of letting the computer do it all the time. Generally the computer takes too long to switch to the next player.

FIFA 64
Nintendo 64

Attack the Goalie

An "undocumented cheat" in the FIFA series of games is what EA's boys call it: If positioned right, you can block a computer goalie's kick for a cheap goal. You can only do this after the computer goalie blocks a shot on goal. Then, as he's winding up for his kick to clear the ball, stand directly in front of him and press B repeatedly (tackle button). Make sure your controller is configured in the Complex Mode, or else you'll foul the goalie.

Goal Storm '97
Sony PlayStation

Scoring Strategy

Use the on-screen radar to locate the last three fullbacks before the opposing goal. Run directly at them, stop, short-pass the ball among your forwards for a moment then look for an opportunity to put one of your forwards in a position to take a through-pass right into the goalie box. As your man sprints toward the goalie to accept the through-pass, gain control of him, wait until the goalie starts to come out and then just tap it into the goal.

World Wide Soccer '97
Sega Saturn

World Wide Alert

World Wide Soccer '97 is hands down the most realistic soccer game for the Saturn ever made. While there are no codes for the game, there is a cheat in which players can score an easy goal. In Easy Mode, work your way up to the computer's goalie and stop. At this point the defenders will stop as well, waiting for you to move. Take aim and shoot an easy free kick right into the goal.

Quick Codes

Perfect Striker
Nintendo 64

Big Head Mode

To get "big-headed" players in Perfect Striker, just enter the following code at the Title Screen: Top C, Top C, Bottom C, Bottom C, Left C, Right C, Left C, Right C, B, A, and then hold down Z and press Start.

Adidas Power Soccer
Sony PlayStation

Super Moves

Most of these moves work only in Arcade Mode.

BACK FLICK= press Circle + Triangle
BACKHEEL= press Square + X
MEGASHOT= press Triangle + X
RUNNING= press Square + Circle
PULL SHIRT= press Triangle + Circle while in defense
DANGEROUS KICK= press Square + X while in defense
SHOVE= press Triangle + X while in defense

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You have the POWER. In this contest you don't rely on the luck-of-the draw. You determine if you win or not. You win by outscoring others in a game of skill. Can you solve the puzzle below? Then you have what it takes. It looks simple, but it's only the start. Each of five more puzzles get a little harder. But this time it's all up to you. Stay in to the end with the highest score and the gear is yours. With whatever options you want. Do you have what it takes? Then play to win!

Computer Contest. Win a blazing fast computer with 200 Mhz MMX Pentium, 24 meg. RAM, 4 Gig. HD, 8X CD-ROM, Windows 95, modem and more!

Video Game Contest. Play on the hi-tech cutting edge with this line-up: Sony Playstation w/ ASCII control pads; Sega Saturn; Game Boy Pocket; and Nintendo 64! Get all four or trade the ones you don't want for CA$H! Bonus options include: 33 inch monitor, $1,000 in games, cash, accessories and more!

Media Rig Contest. The Ultimate Gaming Environment, 60 inch monitor, 130 watt receiver w/ Dolby Digital Surround Sound, and all components shown. Win DSS Satellite Receiver as a BONUS OPTION! This rig will blow you away!!

We're talkin' GAMING HEAVEN!

Directions. Fill in the Mystery Word Grid with words going across that spell out the Mystery Word down the side. Hint: use the Mystery Word Clue.

In the future. There will be four more puzzles at $2.00 each and one tie-breaker at $1.00 which will be sent to you by mail. You will have 3 weeks to solve each puzzle. We don't know how many will play but typically 55% will have the highest score possible score to Phase I, 43% to Phase II, 36% to Phase III, and 32% to Phase IV. The tie-breaker determines the winner. If players are still tied they will split the value of the grand prize they are playing for.

Mystery Word Grid

	H				___
		E			___
P	I	N	C	H	W
	R				___
S					___

MYSTERY WORD

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH .....W	PRESS .....K	BLAST .....A	WRECK .....D
BREAK .....Z	PUNCH .....S	SPRAY C	TURBO V
STOMP .....T	STAND .....R	PRESS .....E	DREAM .....O
CRUSH I	SCORE .....H	SLANT L	CHASE .....P

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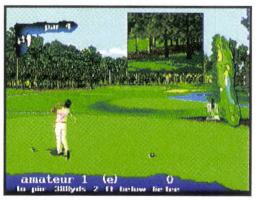
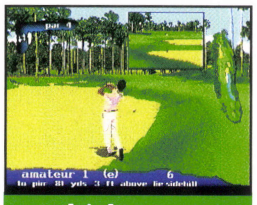
DARE2COMPARE golf

TEE IT UP AND BLAST ONE DOWN THE FAIRWAY





Multiple cameras

"Very Good"

PGA Tour Golf 97

PlayStation

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: EA Sports
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: EA Sports' PGA Tour Golf 97 delivers the total golf package, except for having a ridiculously small number of golf courses.

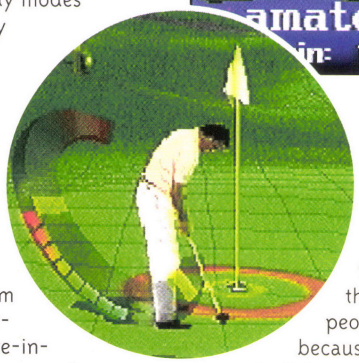
STRENGTHS: As implied by the name, PGA Tour Golf is loaded with professional licenses which helps add an authentic flavor to the game. Not only can you play against the best players, but you can also play as them. (Is that the same as the phrase "If you can't beat them, join them?") If the stock golfers don't suit you, there is an option that allows you to create your own player right down to the color of his/her pants. Additionally, plenty of play modes are available to satisfy any flavor of golf you desire. These modes include play modes such as Skins and various types of other professional tournaments. Graphically, PGA is pleasing, but it could be better. There's nothing here that will blow you away, but there seldom is in golf games. One interesting feature is the picture-in-picture camera that adds a second independent camera view. It allows you to see the ball launch from two angles at once, for whatever it's worth.

WEAKNESSES: Personally, I'm sick and tired of golf games only having two measly courses like PGA Tour does. Sure, they're licensed and look like the real thing, but only having two is ridiculous, especially when the limitless CD-ROM is the medium. Whether this is done to make people buy course disks or because of sheer laziness, I don't know. One thing is certain—it's inexcusable.

WHAT'S NEW: This version of PGA Tour sheds the sophisticated, high-brow look and takes on a more "in-your-face" extreme "ESPN2" look. I'm not sure it fits the game or the sport very well.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: You can play as or against 14 of the most popular PGA players.

PGA Tour 97



Notice the second view on the top

"Solid"

VR Golf '96

PlayStation/Saturn

Publisher: Interplay/VR Sports
Developer: Gremlin
Difficulty: Moderate

IN A NUTSHELL: VR Golf '96 is a good game that could have easily been a lot better. Overall, it's enjoyable, despite the fact that only two courses are included.

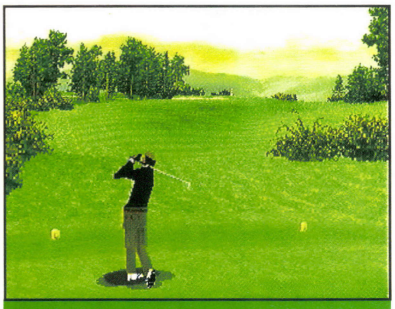
STRENGTHS: This is a fast-paced golf game that's fun to play. There are plenty of golfing aids and other options to help ease any player into the game, or to make it more fair for a novice playing an expert. The graphics are above-average, and offer a variety of interesting Camera Modes from which to view the match. If you use the cool default camera setup, a mixture of different views are used in a fast-paced montage showing the ball in flight until it comes to a rest. To give the game depth, extensive play modes such as "Foursome," "Skins" and "Four Ball" are provided. Interplay has also hinted that they might launch course discs, although there has been no sign of them thus far.

WEAKNESSES: At the risk of sounding like a broken record, VR Golf '96 is another one of those golf titles with only two courses. The ones packaged in VR Golf aren't even real courses, which makes it even more ludicrous that they didn't have someone slap a few more together. Congress should pass a law stopping this lack of golf courses. This title is also devoid of the PGA license and there are no real players to match skills with. Although this doesn't harm a golf game much, its competitor has them.

WHAT'S NEW: This is the first VR Golf, and is certainly a promising start to VR Sports' new series.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The camera system in VR Golf is more dynamic and extensive than the ones offered in other golf simulations. In fact, the menu where you adjust them takes up the entire screen. You can adjust the way the camera functions in addition to choosing which view. I think this is a good feature for the golf game because the interesting angles used while the ball is in flight makes the game seem much more fast-paced.

Plenty of visual golfing aids



VR Sports tees up VR Golf

Realistic golf courses

How The Features Stack Up

▼ GAMES / FEATURES ▶	Number of Courses	Real PGA Players	Real Courses	Create Players	League Play	Variable Weather	Number of Players
VR Golf '96	2	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	1-4
PGA Tour 97	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	1-8

DARE2COMPARE

fishing

DROP A LINE AND GO FOR A LUNKER

"Weak"

Big Bass World Championship

PlayStation

Publisher: Hot-B USA
Developer: Hot-B USA
Difficulty: Moderate

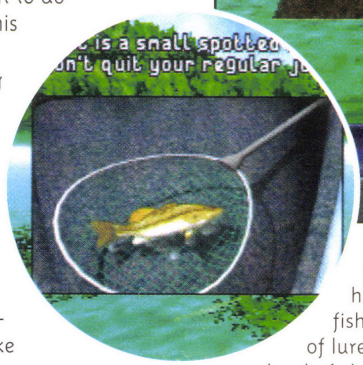
IN A NUTSHELL: One of the very few fishing games available for the PlayStation. With all its options, the game seems like it couldn't possibly go wrong, but a number of irritating gameplay issues cause it to do just that. A game like this can make you wonder why you bother playing the game at all, when it's less frustrating and more relaxing to grab a rod and reel and just go hit the lake yourself.

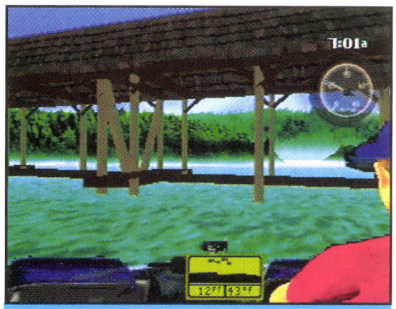
STRENGTHS: The game covers every conceivable aspect of bass fishing, including things like using sonar to locate the highest concentration of fish. Also, a wide selection of lures add an acceptable level of challenge, as well as environmental hazards help to keep things interesting. The lack of PlayStation fishing titles give this game a high profile.

WEAKNESSES: A clunky interface and horrible load times kill this game. Example: Hook a fish and you'll have to sit through a significant load time just to arrive at the poorly illustrated underwater perspective. It makes the real-world alternative far more appealing.

WHAT'S NEW: The fact that a fishing game exists on the PlayStation.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: The detailed casting interface allows players to fine-tune their casts. Power and angle meters give control to every aspect of one of the most essential parts of fishing.





Anglers can roam freely

BBWC uses a clever casting engine

You can decide if it's a keeper

"Awesome"

Reel Fishing

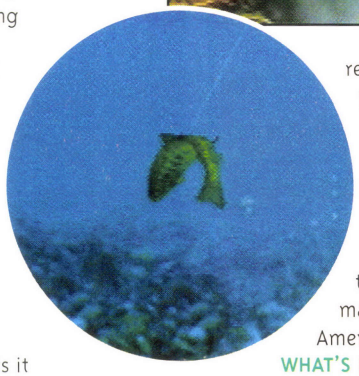
PlayStation

Publisher: Natsume
Developer: Natsume
Difficulty: Easy

IN A NUTSHELL: Reel Fishing is an elegant, visually appealing and well-designed game which may prove to be a bit too Japanese for the U.S. market. (Nonetheless, Natsume feels so strongly about the quality of Reel Fishing, they definitely are bringing it stateside.) In spite of the use of full-motion video, the game is quick to load and moves along swiftly. Reel Fishing's simplicity, however, prevents it from receiving a higher score.

STRENGTHS: The visual presentation of Reel Fishing, known as Fish Eyes in Japan, is simply stunning. With the use of cleverly looped full-motion video sequences and digitized fish images, the game is crisp and clean. Realistic environmental sounds help maintain the illusion of a real fishing trip. A well-designed catch system captures the excitement of snagging an actual fish. And different environments and species of fish offer a great deal of variety.

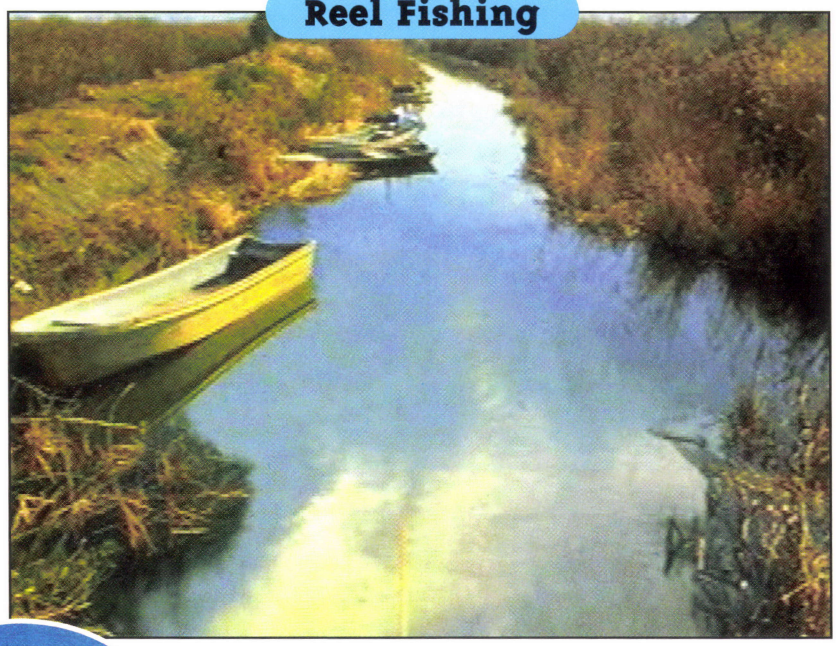
WEAKNESSES: Would-be anglers are restricted to bamboo poles for live bait and reel rigs for fly fishing, limiting the choices somewhat. Also, the use of bamboo poles and the ability to save the fish in aquariums may be too foreign for American gamers.

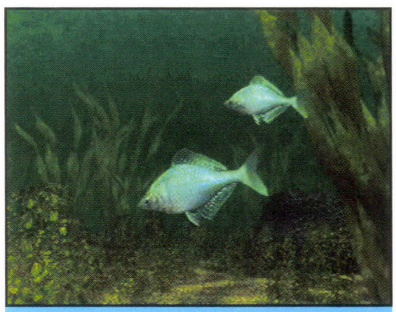


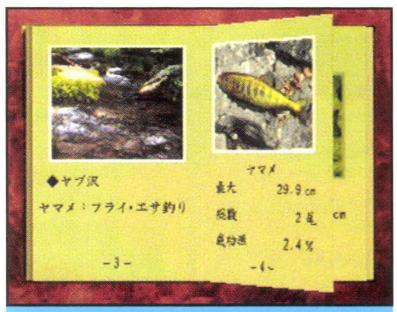
WHAT'S NEW: Reel Fishing is noteworthy because it contains what is possibly the first successful use of full-motion video that doesn't require a preset story line. Also, it shares the novelty of being one of only two PlayStation fishing games, the other being Big Bass World Championship.

WHAT'S UNIQUE: A portrait of a wise old fisherman will offer advice in the form of lengthy voice-overs (in English, of course). Also, players have the option of keeping their catches alive in one of two aquariums at the fishing lodge, where they can feed and care for their fish.

Reel Fishing




Reel Fishing has many fish species



A scrapbook records your success

How The Features Stack Up

▼ GAMES / FEATURES ▶	Different Species of Fish	Underwater View	Location	Tournament	Bait	Variable Weather	Number of Players
Big Bass World Championship	One	Yes	Variable	Yes	Lures	No	1
Reel Fishing	Many	Yes	Fixed	No	Live/Flies	No	1

Team EGM

Sports Game Archive

The collected editors of Team EGM have sorted through the back issues of *Electronic Gaming Monthly* to compile a list of every sports game reviewed since June of 1995. Although there were many great sports games published for the 16-Bit platforms, we decided to limit the list to the 32- and 64-Bit systems dominating today's gaming market.

You may wonder why there are so many PlayStation games on the list. The Nintendo is too new for a solid sports base, and the Saturn has a much smaller ratio of sports titles to the rest of the games. The PlayStation simply has a ton more games than the other two systems.

At Team EGM, sports games are our business, and business is good. We'll keep you posted on the latest games, and give you our honest reviews on every new title as it arrives.

The Reviewers

TODD MOWATT
Currently the Wave Race tricks champion. He's wanted on 15 planets.

DINDO PEREZ
"Rage Racer King of the hill!"

JOE RYBICKI
Burned-out punk rock icon turned game reviewer.

DEAN HAGER
Three-time winner of the Heisman trophy at NCAA GameBreaker. He also holds the pizza-eating championship during deadline at nine slices.

KRAIG KUJAWA
Gold Medal—Synchronized Swimming —'92 Olympics. One of the most well-respected reviewers of our time.

The Scores

1 Waste of Effort
2 Really Bad
3 Bad
4 Weak
5 OK, almost good
6 Average
7 Above Average
8 Good, with minor problems
9 Almost perfect
10 Perfection

PlayStation

GAME	PUBLISHER	RATING	
Andretti Racing October 1996 Issue	EA Sports Drive either an F1 or stock car to victory.	7.7	8.0
Adidas Power Soccer August 1996 Issue	Psygnosis Perform tons of special moves in Arcade Mode.	7.5	7.0
Big Bass World Championship April 1997 Issue	Hot-B USA Land a lunker in this cool fishing sim.	7.5	8.0
Big Hurt Baseball August 1996 Issue	Acclaim Acclaim brings on the pain on the PlayStation.	7.5	7.5
Bottom of the 9th June 1996 Issue	Konami "...buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jacks..."	5.0	6.0
Cool Boarders February 1997 Issue	Sony Computer Ent. Perform more aerial stunts than the Blue Angels.	7.0	7.0
Destruction Derby 2 December 1996 Issue	Psygnosis Vehicular mayhem this Sunday, Sunday, SUNDAY!	8.5	9.0
F1 Racing December 1996 Issue	Psygnosis Race through the winding streets of Monaco.	7.0	7.5
FIFA 97 February 1997 Issue	EA Sports Real crowd chants will inspire you to victory.	6.5	7.0
Goal Storm March 1996 Issue	Konami Bicycle-kick your way to victory!	8.5	9.0
International Track & Field July 1996 Issue	Konami Hurl javelins and leap hurdles at home.	7.0	7.0
Jet Moto January 1997 Issue	Sony Computer Ent. This is NOT your father's Jet Ski.	9.0	9.5

PlayStation

GAME	PUBLISHER	RATING	
Madden 97 October 1996 Issue	EA Sports Often imitated, never duplicated.	9.2	9.0
MLB Pennant Race December 1996 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports Tons of options mark Sony's first baseball title.	8.5	8.0
Motor Toon Grand Prix January 1997 Issue	Sony Computer Ent. Wacky weapons are the highlight of this one.	8.5	8.0
NASCAR Racing November 1996 Issue	Sierra The PC classic roars onto the PlayStation.	7.0	7.8
NBA-In the Zone February 1996 Issue	Konami Get in the zone with fast-paced b-ball action.	9.0	7.5
NBA-In the Zone 2 January 1997 Issue	Konami New features and improved speed help this title.	9.0	8.0
NBA Jam Extreme January 1997 Issue	Acclaim Revamped Jam engine features polygonal players.	9.0	8.0
NBA Jam: TE November 1995 Issue	Acclaim Boomshakalaka! Enough said...	8.5	8.0
NBA Live 96 June 1996 Issue	EA Sports EA Sports' first PS b-ball makes it to the top.	9.0	8.5
NBA Live 97 December 1996 Issue	EA Sports Polygonal players and juiced-up speed.	8.5	9.0
NBA Shoot Out June 1995 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports Play against the best NBA players in the league.	8.0	7.5
NBA Shoot Out '97 April 1997 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports Improved speeds and cleaner engine.	9.0	9.0

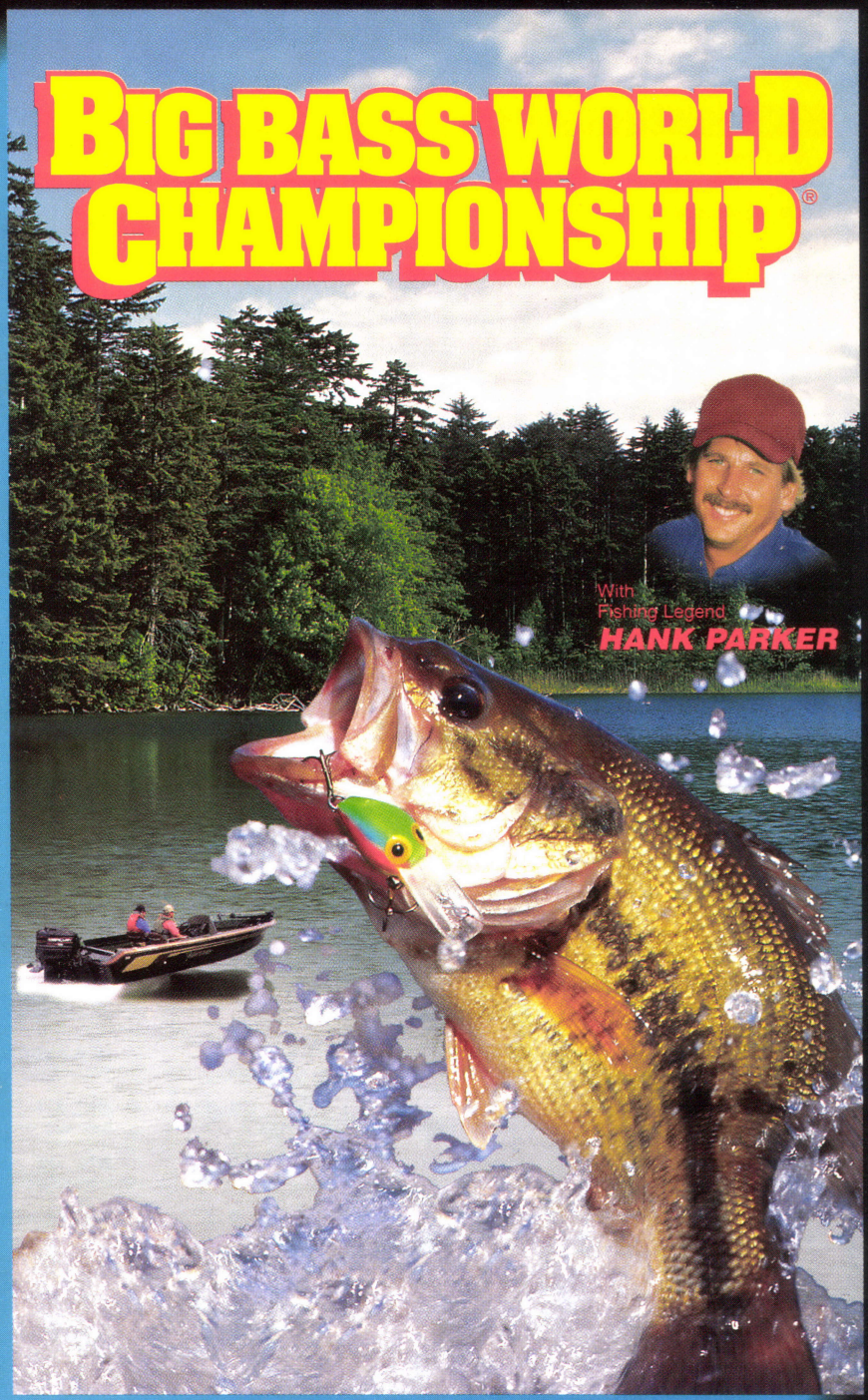
FISH IN 3-D!

HOT-B presents *Big Bass World Championship With Hank Parker*–innovative 3-D fishing for the PlayStation™ game console.

Utilizing a wide array of lures on realistic lakes, you can work your way through the ranks to earn the opportunity to compete with Hank Parker in pro fishing tournaments.

This game's new technology assures that your fishing experience will seem so real that you will think that you are already out on the lake!

Now available for the PlayStation™ game console!



Big Bass World Championship provides an unlimited choice of fishing spots on four progressive tournament lakes and on your own private lake. The private lake allows a fish eyes' view of bass behavior in an amazingly life-like environment. Drive your boat with precision and cast anywhere you think big bass are lurking. Apply your angling skills and control the exact lure movements to entice a monster bass into an aquatic battle!

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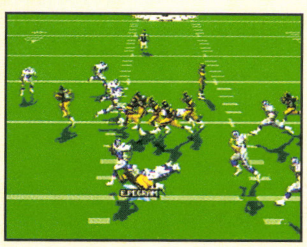
PlayStation

GAME	PUBLISHER	RATING	
Need for Speed May 1996 Issue	EA Sports "I feel the need...the need for speed."	9.0	8.5
NFL GameDay January 1996 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports Real players, real gameplay, really good.	9.0	9.0
NFL GameDay '97 February 1997 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports More features than Madden in a shorter package.	9.5	9.5
NFL Quarterback Club '97 October 1996 Issue	Acclaim Play as the staff of *EGM* in this option-laden title.	6.0	5.7
NHL 97 December 1996 Issue	EA Sports The classic series gets juiced for this season.	8.5	9.0
NHL Face Off February 1996 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports The first hockey game for the PlayStation.	9.0	8.5
NHL Face Off '97 December 1996 Issue	Sony Interactive Sports Icon passing debuts in this fast-paced update.	9.5	9.0
NHL Open Ice February 1997	Midway NBA Jam on ice.	5.0	7.5
NHL Powerplay '97 December 1996 Issue	Virgin A solid, but not groundbreaking, hockey title.	7.5	7.5
Olympic Soccer July 1996 Issue	U.S. Gold Kick it out with the world's greatest teams.	7.0	7.0
Olympic Summer Games September 1996 Issue	Eidos Compete in Atlanta's Olympic Summer Games.	6.0	6.5
PGA Tour 96 November 1995 Issue	Electronic Arts Plaid pants are in style when you're in the tour.	8.5	9.0
Powerplay Hockey 96 July 1996 Issue	Virgin Interactive Expect exceptional visuals from this skater.	8.0	8.0
Ridge Racer April 1996 Issue	Namco Go, Ridge Racer, Go. Still one of the best.	9.0	9.0
Road Rash March 1996 Issue	Electronic Arts Hit and run will never be the same.	7.0	7.0
Street Racer January 1997 Issue	Ubi Soft The Super NES classic gets a 32-Bit facelift.	8.0	6.0
Ten Pin Alley February 1997 Issue	ASC Games The fun of bowling without the rented shoes.	8.5	8.5
Test Drive: Off-Road April 1997 Issue	Accolade Crunch the competition in your Hummer.	7.5	7.5
Triple Play Baseball 97 July 1996 Issue	EA Sports Thomas, Bonds, Piazza, it's in the game.	7.5	8.0
VR Golf November 1996 Issue	Interplay Everyone will admire your amazing putts.	9.2	9.7
Virtual Pool February 1997 Issue	Interplay Quit talkin' and start chalkin'.	7.5	7.0
VR Soccer June 1996 Issue	Interplay ...taking soccer games to the edge.	8.5	8.5
WCW vs. the World April 1997 Issue	T•HQ It's eye-gouge-errific!	8.0	7.5
WWF Wrestlemania December 1995 Issue	Acclaim Go for the three count.	9.0	9.0
2Xtreme January 1997 Issue	Sony Like Road Rash on extreme vehicles.	8.0	5.0



At this stage of the game, the Sony PlayStation is the system of choice for many sports gamers. The PlayStation has the most sports games, and big titles frequently hit the PS first.

Nintendo 64

GAME	PUBLISHER	RATING	
Cruis'n USA February 1997 Issue	Nintendo Arcade genius Eugene Jarvis strikes again!	5.0	5.0
Gretzky Hockey November 1996 Issue	Midway Play against the "Great One" himself.	8.0	8.5
Wave Race 64 November 1996 Issue	Nintendo The most realistic wave physics ever.	9.0	9.6
NBA Hang Time January 1997 Issue	Midway Can you hang with the best in the NBA?	8.5	7.0

So far, the Nintendo 64 is the leanest of the "big three" in the number and variety of sports games. This almost certainly will change as more third-party developers come on board.

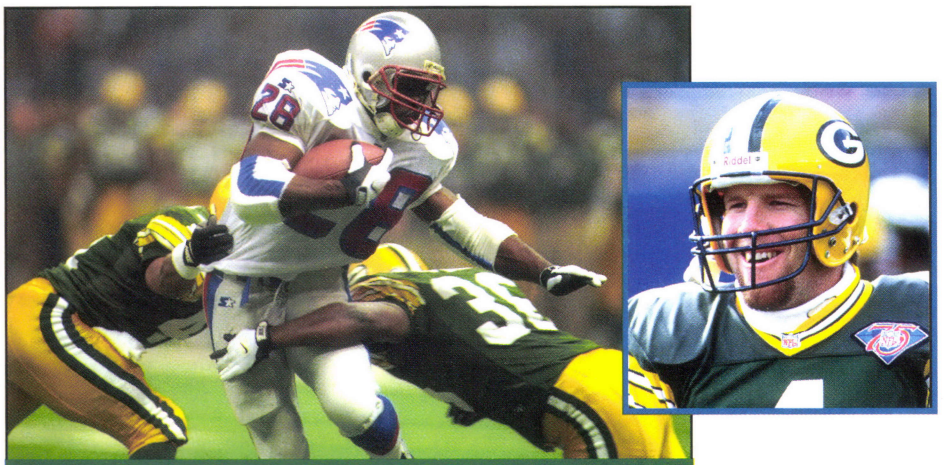
Saturn

GAME	PUBLISHER	RATING	
DecAthlete September 1996 Issue	Sega Sports Possibly the best Olympic game ever.	8.0	8.5
FIFA Soccer 96 February 1996 Issue	EA Sports The '96 edition of the popular soccer title.	8.0	8.0
Hang on GP '95 March 1996 Issue	Sega Sports Take the turns and watch the burn in GP '95.	7.0	7.0
Hardcore 4x4 January 1997 Issue	ASC Games One game that lives up to its name: hardcore.	8.0	8.5
NBA Action August 1996 Issue	Sega Sports NBA and action say it all. The scores do too.	4.0	5.0
NHL All-Star Hockey December 1995 Issue	Sega Sports The all-stars of hockey come together.	7.5	7.5
NFL '97 February 1997 Issue	Sega Sports Gametek's Jimmy Johnson engine on the Saturn.	4.0	5.0
NHL Powerplay '96 May 1996 Issue	Virgin Interactive Virgin's hockey title comes to the Saturn.	7.5	8.5
Quarterback Attack December 1995 Issue	Digital Pictures Digitized Ditka. Need we say more?	7.5	7.0
Saturn Virtua Racing October 1995 Issue	Time Warner Int. The arcade hit comes home. It's awesome.	8.0	7.0
Sega Rally Championship January 1996 Issue	Sega Sports AM2's arcade hit rocks on the Saturn.	8.5	8.5
World Series Baseball January 1996 Issue	Sega Sports Saturn owners are able to play in the Series.	8.5	9.0
World Series Baseball II November 1996 Issue	Sega Sports A worthy follow-up to its celebrated predecessor.	9.2	9.3

Sega has a respectable catalog of sports hits from which to choose. Sega's excellent arcade conversions of their numerous AM2 racing hits make the Saturn a good choice for race fans.

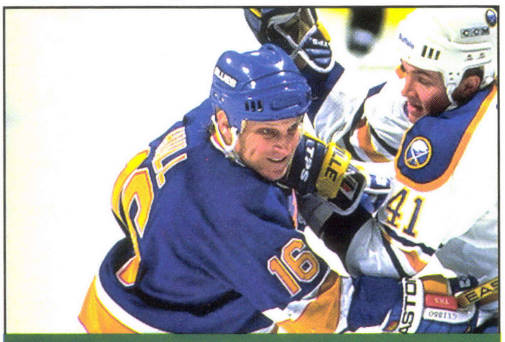
Next Time

More exclusive previews and reviews of the hottest football, hockey and basketball games.



AN INTERVIEW WITH GREEN BAY PACKERS' BRETT FAVRE

Sports game mania continues this fall



EXCLUSIVE HOCKEY FACE-OFF

INTERVIEWS WITH SPORTS' BIGGEST NAMES

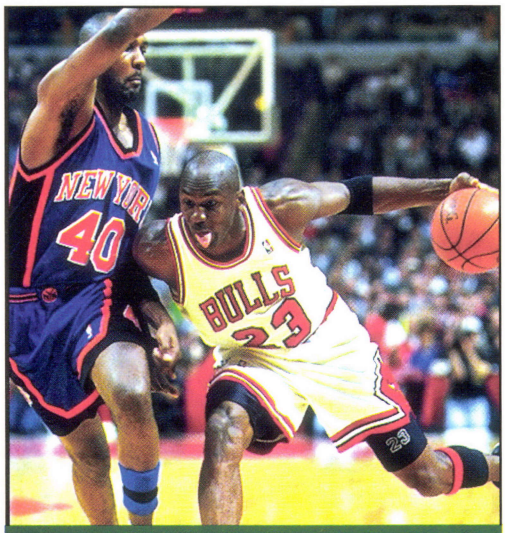
Two-time NFL's most valuable player and quarterback of Super Bowl XXXI's winning Green Bay Packers stops buy for a chat. Brett Favre talks about gaming and his relationship with Acclaim and their Quarterback Club '98 football game coming for the Sony PlayStation and the Nintendo 64.

MADDEN VS. GAMEDAY...THE SAGA CONTINUES

EA Sports and Sony have their game faces on, but will they have their games ready for us to crown a gridiron champion? The last two years they have avoided a direct confrontation. Last year Madden 97 sold 500,000 units and Sony's GameDay '97 sold 350,000 units. This year we will be the final judge.

TAKING IT TO THE HOOP WITH AUTHORITY

We run down all of the best basketball games ever made. We will also preview the latest hoops entry in an exclusive roundball round-up, including a couple of surprises gaming companies are planning to spring on you for the N64...



AN IN-DEPTH ROUNDBALL ROUND-UP

SPORTS VIDEO GAMES

EGM Players' Guide to Sports Video Games

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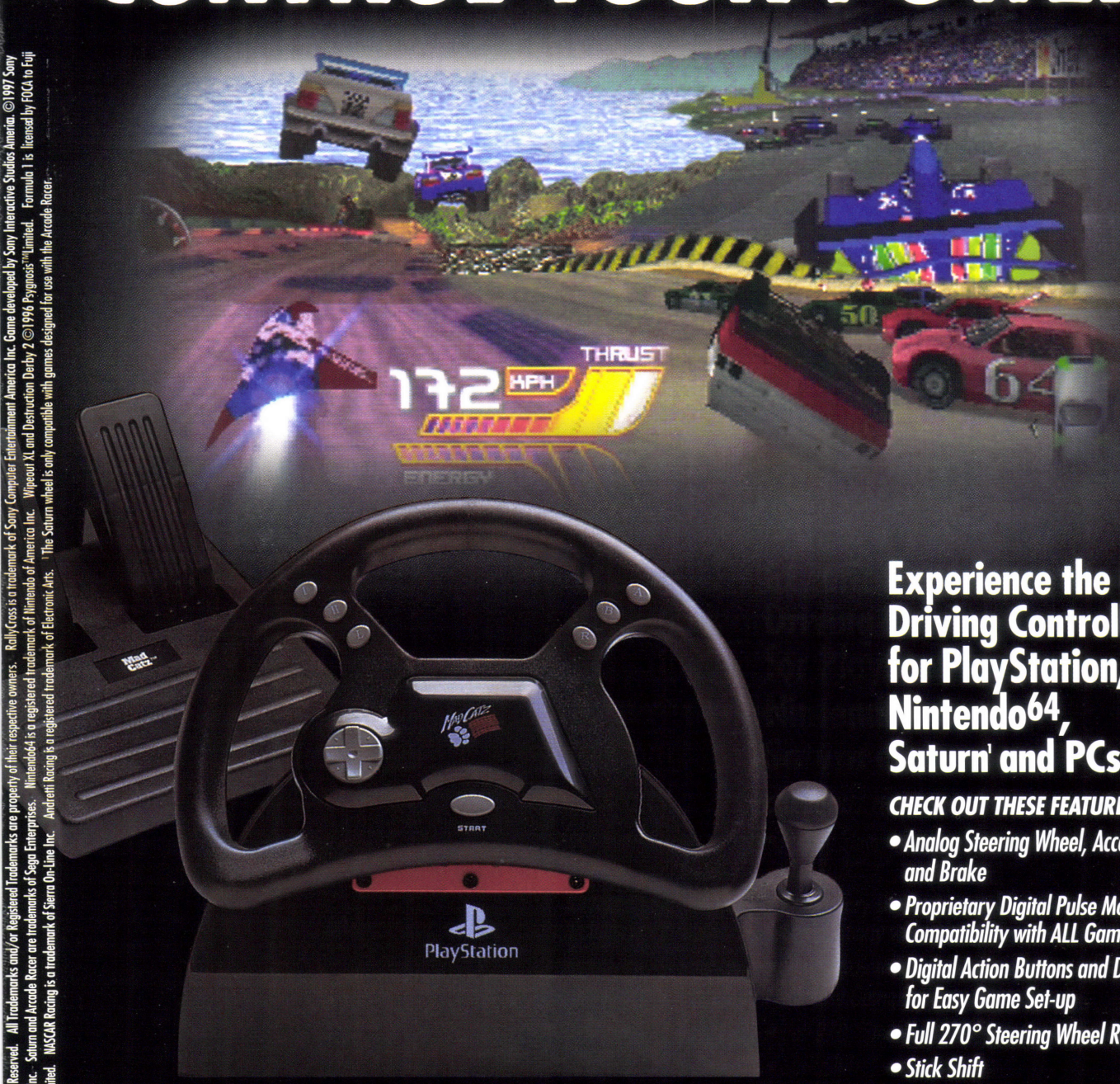

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